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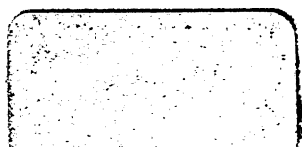
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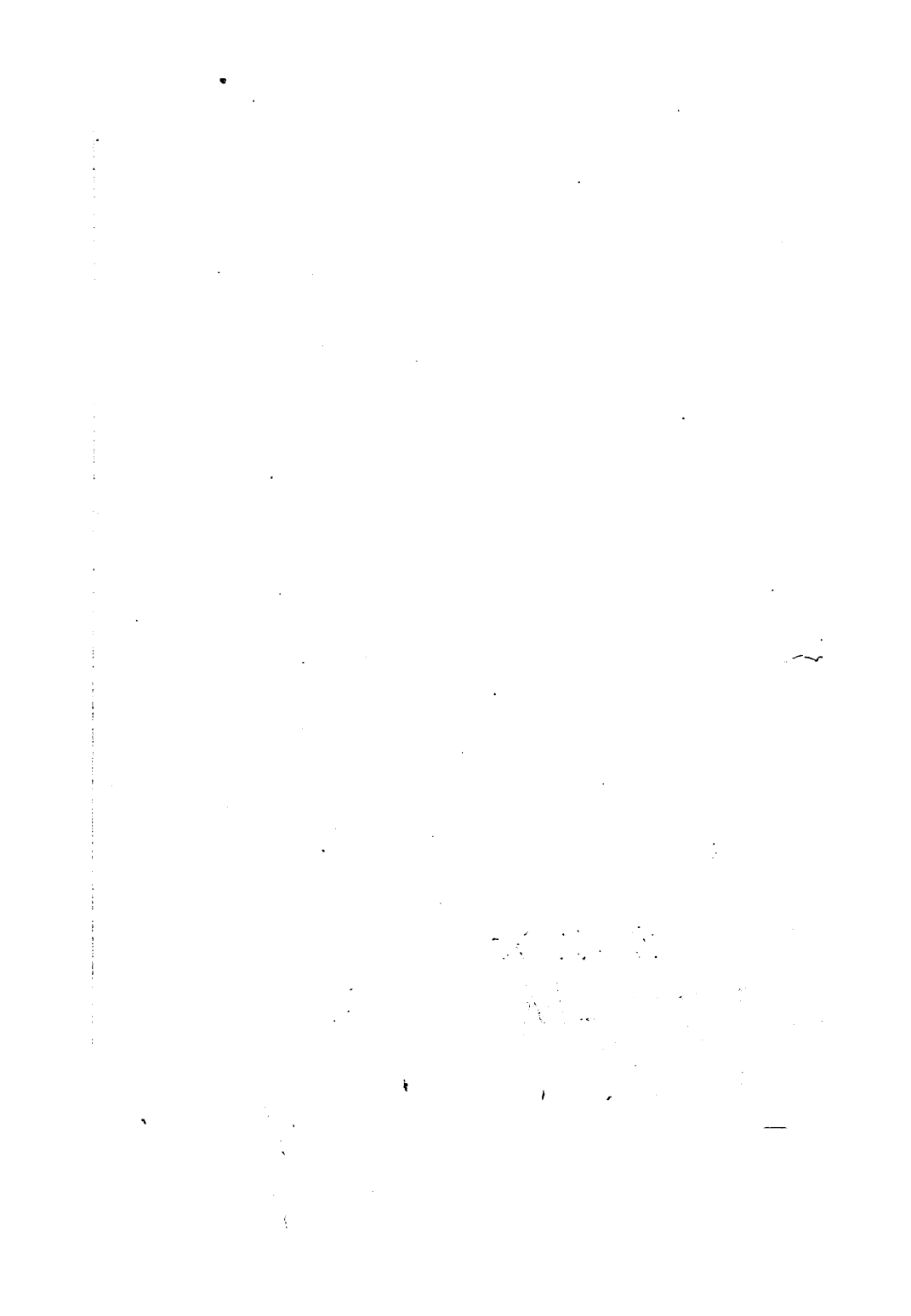
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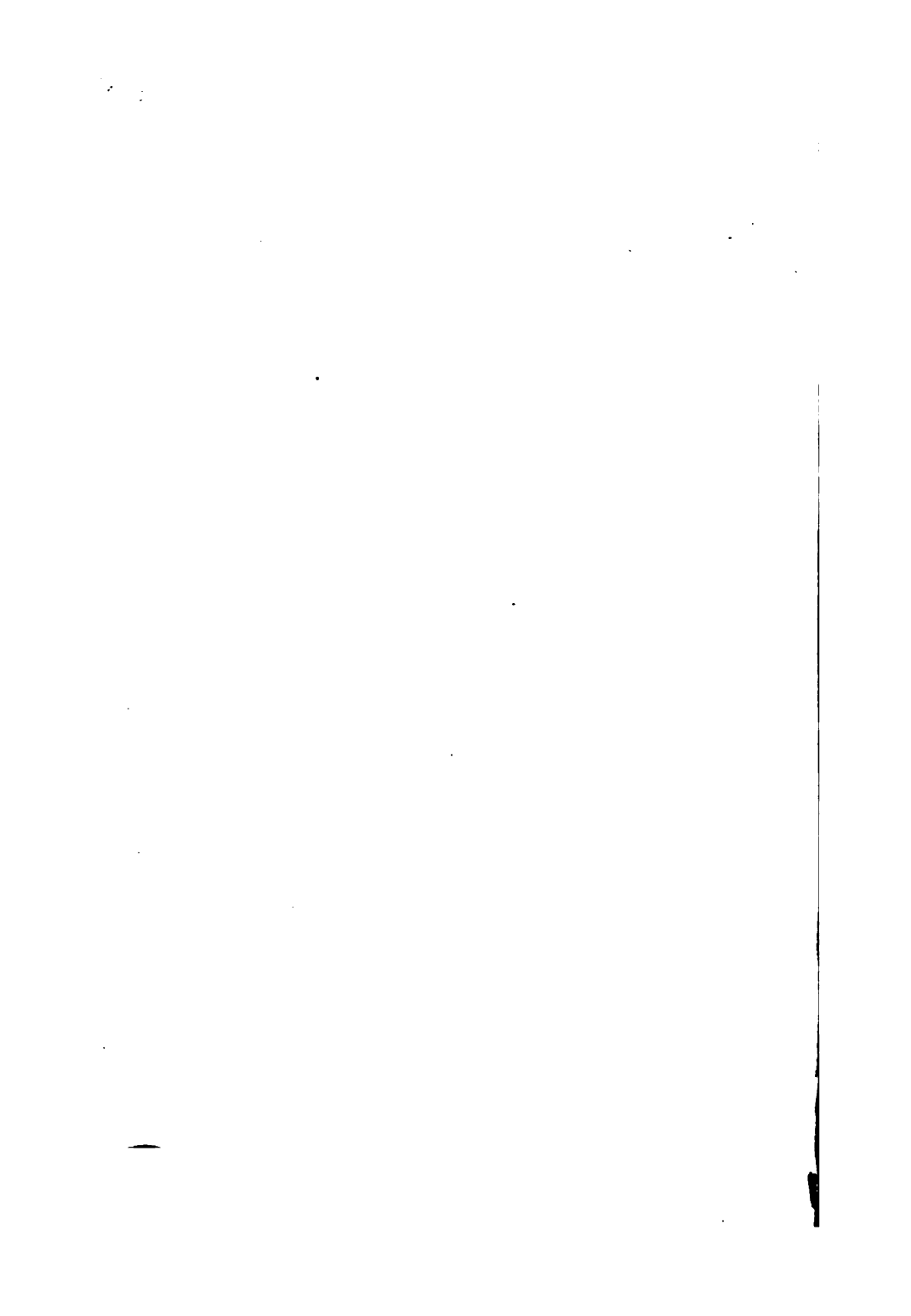






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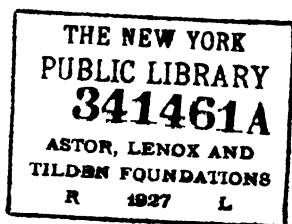
# SHAKESPEARE'S MACBETH

EDITED BY  
DANIEL V. THOMPSON, A.M.  
HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
IN THE LAWRENCEVILLE SCHOOL



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Most of the opinions advanced are purposely put in a positive form with the hope that they will either convince or stimulate—not confuse. Details have been viewed in the light of the whole, and, though the steps are often omitted, general conclusions have been reached only after examination of all the evidence at hand.

The text is based upon the *Cambridge* edition of 1892. Interpretive comment has been drawn largely from the works of scholars and thinkers, a partial list of whom will be found at the end of the introduction. Personal contact with the student in the classroom, and with my colleagues and friends outside it, has defined my views of

*Macbeth*, and led to that pleasant sense of relationship which we call "old acquaintance." Yet there are many points on which I have spoken with more diffidence than appears on the surface. If there is stability in my commentary, I owe it to years of friendly chastening by that thorough student and lover of the play—I. H. B. Spiers, of the Penn Charter School.

The introduction may be read after, not before, the play; I have made the running commentary in the notes sufficient for the first attack.

D. V. T.

*Lawrenceville, New Jersey*  
*October, 1916.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### THE PLAY

JUST before the Norman Conquest, Edward the Confessor sat on the throne of England, and Duncan was king in Scotland. The story of *Macbeth* belongs, therefore, to the eleventh century. Five hundred years later (probably in 1605), Shakespeare found this story in an old chronicle written by a man named Holinshed, and made it over into a play, to be performed before King James, the Scottish king of England.

In making this old story into a play Shakespeare followed the chronicle closely when the material seemed suitable or the language convenient; but when he chose, he omitted, added, or recombined the details of the legend to make his drama effective. It is not as authentic history, therefore, that we must regard the play, but as a representation of certain phases of human life, especially in Scotland, in the barbarous early days. Such a representation may convey a higher truth than fidelity to mere historical fact. There are certain great truths about humanity, whether Scottish, English, American, or any other, which have been forever interpreted by the action and the motives of this drama. So long as men are ambitious and women love, so long as goodness has champions and the devil works in the dark, so long as society suffers when a hero falls, and sin reaps according to its sowing,—

so long will this tragedy of *Macbeth* cry out with the veritable voice of human passion, and proclaim the retributory vengeance of God's reply.

*Macbeth* is the shortest of the tragedies of Shakespeare—half as long as *Hamlet*, for example—and it is the least complete and finished of them; or, perhaps, the most altered by a later and inferior hand. But the very shortness of it tends to make the action swift, and while learned critics frown on certain passages as possibly not genuinely Shakespeare's, the judgment of all readers accords the highest praise to the eloquence, power, and truth of the drama as a whole.

We are to understand the plot as outlining itself something like this. Duncan and Macbeth, own cousins, were rivals in election to the throne of Scotland. Duncan won. Macbeth led the royal troops against a rebellion which threatened the state, and earned popular and royal gratitude. But prosperity is hard to bear, and circumstances both natural and supernatural tempted him to murder Duncan and seize the crown himself. This he did, his strong and clever wife conspiring with him. But murder will out. Banquo and Macduff, his fellow generals, aroused the new king's suspicions of them by their own natural suspicions of him, and so were made to suffer. No peace came with the possession of the crown to either the royal "butcher or his fiendlike queen." Sleep was denied them. Macbeth's temper grew worse and worse till it approached maniacal fury, and brought upon his reign "a dismal and a fatal end." Lady Macbeth's nerves were tortured till she sought relief in death. So, while we abhor the sins of this dreadful pair, we pity their utter

downfall, and the ruin of two lives that should and could have been so fair.

#### DOER AND DREAMER

How shall we explain such a tragedy? How can a man, so well-born and so justly honored as Macbeth appears in the opening of the play, have become the slave of evil ambition and the unspeakable criminal whom all mankind curse as their nation's scourge, in the closing act?

The truth seems to be that in the soul of Macbeth were two antagonistic tendencies. He was a man of intense activity—prompt, fearless, resistless; but he was also a poet, dwelling in the world of dreams. These two temperaments were so strong, each in itself, that when one was in the ascendant the other had the power of making the man the very image of stormy wretchedness. He was torn and fretted within himself as a strong tide is torn and fretted by an opposing wind.

The calm efficiency of a united and normal mind was wholly lacking in him after the battle which made his fame so dangerously great. During that battle his prowess as a warrior and his loyalty to Scotland flowed in the same direction. He was at war with Duncan's foes, but he was at peace within himself; and the results were, both to him and to his country, honorable and important.

But the Witches, those emissaries of the Prince of Darkness, who voice to Macbeth his temptation, find in the hour of Macbeth's triumph their own most favorable opportunity. They hail him with three flattering greetings as he returns with Banquo across a desert heath after the battle. The first title is innocent enough, that

of the Thane of Glamis, which Macbeth knows he has just inherited from his father. But he is then complimented with the title of the Thane of Cawdor, one of his fellow noblemen. This whets his curiosity, and also his thirst for honor, so that when the weird Sisters all hail him as the future king, they tempt him with a vision of eminence long and deeply familiar in the secret of his own heart and his wife's.

Fatally in harmony, therefore, with his heart's desire, is this supernatural message. Banquo, not being beset by inward ambitions to echo these weird greetings, takes the witches lightly, almost frivolously, and rallies his great comrade on the strength of the impression such hags can make upon him. When at last he is forced to admit to himself that Macbeth is in very truth overawed by the witches' appeal to his superstition, he speaks with simplicity and friendliness what should have been to Macbeth the very word of life.

The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's  
In deepest consequence.

Well had it been for Macbeth if he could have regarded with such lightness of innocence the sayings of the weird women. But herein lay his doom. The prophecies were in line with his hopes, and his mind could not of itself throw off the spell and sway of such alluring fancies. He who had been the hero on the field of battle an hour before, whose single-handed, single-hearted prowess had swept the nation's foes into submission, has now no word to say. The victor is threatened, not by any outward or visible foe, but

by that subtlest of all ambushes, the secret and guilty hopes of his own breast. From the moment when, to his intense if not morbid imagination, he appears to have the coöperation of the mysterious forces of the spirit world on his behalf, Macbeth is a different man. His dreams command, and he fretfully struggles to obey; he dallies with temptation, and waits only for the chain to drag him hard enough, when he becomes responsive to its tension; he reasons as to right and wrong, paints his purposes in colors lurid with the fires of hell. Condemning himself for entertaining them, he hesitates, poses, plays the hypocrite often to his wife, always to others; and yet, through evil report and good, he is doomed to defeat at the hands of Fate. He sins against the light, and the Light condemns his life to outer darkness.

We have seen that when the vision and the action of Macbeth operated in harmony, his action was heroic and his power invincible. We have a chance to observe in the first extended soliloquy, "If it were done, when 'tis done," etc., how his power was melted into inaction when his imagination depicted a deed so foreign to his nature as the murder of his guest and king. His hand found the deed *revolting*. As Shakespeare says of Brutus's mental conflict before the assassination of Cæsar,

The genius and the mortal instruments  
Are then in council; and the state of man  
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then  
The nature of an insurrection.

That is Macbeth's situation. His *mortal instruments*, his hands, have raised an *insurrection* against his *genius*, or

his will. Therefore, in place of the intense and successful activity of the loyal general, we have the tremulous hesitancy of the false kinsman, the perfidious subject, the treacherous host.

What shall he do? He cannot forever stand pricking his futile ambition into false starts. Is he, at the close of this soliloquy, about to come to a manly determination to wait till chance shall crown him; or is he, out of patience with his perplexing scruples, on the point of surrendering to his hot desire for the crown? The possible outcome is not left for Macbeth to decide alone. Lady Macbeth enters, chides his poverty of spirit, "chastises with the valor of her tongue" the fears and fancies that wilt his resolution; and by suggesting, in a matter-of-fact tone, certain definite practical measures to be followed, convinces her husband that the deed is safe. She persuades him to a new resolve, and leads him back to the banquet hall to give the king another happy hour of life before he shall retire to his last earthly sleep.

Out of inaction, the Dreamer has again become the Doer. Again the hand and heart are moving towards a common end. Again Macbeth is ready with his "mortal instruments" to do mighty deeds. But, alas, how weirdly different this harmony of purposes and moods from that with which he slew Macdonwald, and put Norway to flight! The efficiency which was then so loyal, and so wholesome for the state and king and homes of Scotland, has now turned black with treason and poisonous with selfishness; and the new alliance, instead of involving such a comrade as the open-minded Banquo, carries

downward, into disloyalty and infamy, the misguided wife who sins with and for her husband.

### THE ACCOMPLICE

We can discern in Macbeth throughout the play that conflict between the habit of reflection and the capacity for tremendous action, which we have called the conflict between dreaming and doing. Can we find in Lady Macbeth a temperament which will help us to understand her part?

She seizes with eagerness upon her husband's letter and exults over his new honors and the prophecies of the weird women. But her love for Macbeth and her ambition in his behalf teach her that for his sake she must distrust his will-power.

Yet do I fear thy nature:  
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness  
To catch the nearest way.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hie thee hither  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear  
etc., etc.,

Under the impulse of this sense of wifely duty she steels herself to an unwomanly and unhuman hardness, and allies herself with the powers of darkness, even with the "murdering ministers" that "wait on nature's mischief." To her visionary and vacillating husband she then becomes a dynamo of evil energy—swift, resourceful, diabolically compelling. She proposes to let nothing "impede him from the golden round" which is now placed within

his easy reach by "fate and metaphysical aid." Her taunting tongue is as bold as it is clever, and the black scruples are wiped from the halting hero's mind.

Why, then, should he ever have faltered or failed? How was the scheme defeated, with such resources and such inspired help?

The moment of her doom was the moment, when, after her husband had killed his king, his horror and his fear throttled the murderer's sense of triumph, and revealed him to his wife as possessed and cowed by his delusional terrors. She, poor woman, had believed that when, once for all, with her help, the deed was done, Macbeth's joy in the crown would still his doubts and smother his conscience.

You shall put

This night's great business into my dispatch,  
Which shall to all our nights and days to come  
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

But there is ruin and defeat in her voice when she pleads with the distraught murderer to forget his bloody hands, and to speak sanely. Of course she is not yet ready to surrender. She keeps her head, she covers his mistakes, she plays the hospitable queen. But there is the prophecy of an unescapable vengeance in her plea,

These deeds must not be thought

After these ways. *So, it will make us mad!*

When Macbeth heard the Voice cry "Sleep no more," his wife sought to bring him to his senses with the incredulous question,

Who was it that thus cried?

But this brave attitude could not give sleep thereafter, either to him or to her. The "gilding" of the grooms with blood was the deed of a bold woman, but it stained her hand so deep that all the perfumes of Arabia could not cleanse it.

From the death of Duncan to her own suicide there was neither joy, nor peace, nor hope, for her. She wrought herself into a heartrending show of courage whenever she found her husband weary or disheartened. Again and again, from the outspoken mood of solitary despair she moved into the presence of Macbeth a cheering help-mate, without a visible tremor. Alone, she moans,

Naught's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content,

but a moment later, utters this wifely exhortation to Macbeth,—

How, now, my lord, why do you keep alone,  
Of sorriest fancies your companions making?

\* \* \* \* \*

Sleek o'er your rugged looks;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight!

The truth about Lady Macbeth seems to be that her complete self-confidence, her desire and power to dominate her husband, were gone—crushed out of her by the fear of consequences which she had had no vision to foresee. Her leadership was destroyed by the failure of her first great stroke; and the failure of that stroke was due to the

confusion of mind, the fears and fancies, the guilty self-conflict, of the husband for whose sake she had made the sacrifice.

Her way was to throw her all at a single cast, and when the game went against her, to perish by slow self-torture. She gave no sign in her waking hours, but wore away with the canker of her thoughts,—a broken spirit, sleepless and distraught—the most pathetic example of subjugated but unrepentant sinner the mind of man can conceive. “Unnatural deeds” *did* breed “unnatural troubles,” and she did need the “divine.”

Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow.

#### BANQUO AND MACDUFF

(It has been well said that Banquo, Macduff, and Lennox were the instruments of God who made Macbeth's reign a failure. Lennox's part was to inspire a hostile public opinion about Macbeth. For this subtle service his tongue was as clever as his wit was keen.)

The key to the character of Banquo is his simplicity of thought and motive. Thus he is a perfect *foil* for Macbeth; he “thinketh no evil.” But he is a brave general, and faithful unto death in his allegiance to Duncan and Duncan's memory. The doubt one may feel about his way of going about his great duty of “fighting against the undivulged pretence of treasonous malice,” is wholly set at rest by the fact that Macbeth feared and hated him above all other men, and would not rest till he had laid him low.

If, as is probable, the play of *Macbeth* was presented in a complimentary spirit shortly after King James's accession to the English throne, it is highly natural that Banquo, as the reputed ancestor of the Stuart sovereigns, should be portrayed as a wholly faultless and admirable character. Of all the thanes, he is the most childlike in spirit, the noblest in principle, the most royally self-contained and fearless.

As Banquo is called *right valiant*, so Macduff is called *the good*. His courage and devotion to justice were unquestioned, and after grievous loss, he becomes the instrument of a tremendous retribution. His intelligence and idealism are not so large as Banquo's, and he does not in so high a degree inspire King Macbeth's guilty fear. One of the most tragical points in the play is the unjust anger of Lady Macduff towards her good husband; and one of the most pathetic is the effort made by her eldest son, the young Macduff, to allay this feeling and comfort his mother. He knew his father to be a true Scot,—close-mouthed, as well as single-minded, strong, and brave.

#### THE WEIRD SISTERS

The unholy three are called the Weird Sisters,—fate-sisters, sister-fates. The name is a far more terrible one than that of witches. One name implies the fear of harm to property, or, at most, to the body; the other, of injury to the *soul*, even injury to the life of the whole community. This deeper superstition was held vividly in Scotland (having been derived from Scandinavian sources); and it is more than possible that Shakespeare had

visited Scotland with Ben Jonson and other players and there gained his great and gloomy vision of the "weird sisters." Charles Lamb, distinguishing the witches of *Macbeth* from "the plain, traditional, old-woman-witches of our ancestors," says, in his inimitable way, "That should be a hardy sheriff, with the power of the county at his heels, that should lay hands on the Weird Sisters. *They are of another jurisdiction.*"

If for a moment we regard the temptation of Macbeth from the practical viewpoint of the dramatist, we discover that it is necessary not only that he suffer the temptation, but that somehow or other the audience be made aware of it. Either it must be told them, or they must witness it. Shakespeare devised the witches as the embodiment, the personification, of Macbeth's temptation. There is no distinction to be drawn, morally, between their "solicitations" and the movements of guilty ambition within his own soul. One motive-force reaches the intelligence of the spectators through the visible ministrations of the Weird Women; the other, through the words of Macbeth to himself or to his wife.

These inducements to the unlawful attainment of the crown were essentially one and the same temptation. But to Macbeth the unearthly allurements of the witches seemed to be authorized by a higher power in the domain of evil. He thought he learned from their lips that Satan himself was fighting on his side for the crown; and with this consciousness of "metaphysical aid," the natural promptings which he felt within himself were given an irresistible driving power.

Professor Baker illuminates the dramatic purpose of

the witches in a sentence or two. "The fact is, in a sense *Macbeth* is a Greek tragedy; if what we mean by Greek is saying that tragedy is the fulfilling, struggle though the individual may, of a blind fate. For does not the whole tragedy of *Macbeth* depend upon the fact that the messages of the witches fulfil themselves relentlessly, in spite of all the scheming and the crime with which Macbeth tries either to thwart them or to force on them his own interpretation?"

#### KING JAMES AND THE PLAY

Attention is called elsewhere to the evidence that Shakespeare paid, in *Macbeth*, three veiled compliments to King James, from whom his company (The King's Men) acquired the right to act. One of these compliments is found in the noble character of Banquo, from whom all the Stuart kings were known to be descended. Another consists of the Dumb-Show, in which, by the magic of the witches, James himself is prophetically presented to the astonished eyes of Macbeth five centuries ahead of his true date. It was no small pleasure to so vain a king to be thus bodied forth with "two-fold balls and treble sceptre"—the first to bear those symbols of imperial pomp. The third compliment lies in the scene at the English court in the reign of Edward, where that pious monarch was reputed to cure the "king's evil" by the laying on of hands. James fully believed himself to have inherited this "healing benediction," and took solemn pride in following the example of the Confessor.

But there are other points in which, it would appear, *Macbeth* should not have been displeasing to King James.

The play is Scotch; and James spoke English with a broad Scotch "burr," and was in other ways more Scotch than English.

The play is highly moral; and, as James in licensing the players had ignored much counsel from the severe religious guides whom he delighted to honor, it must have pleased him to refute their fears with such an exemplary drama.

The play derides the Jesuits, whom the King feared.

The play is strongly tintured with phrases, doctrine, and imagery from the Bible; and James was not only a great student of the Scriptures, himself, but was employing famous scholars to make that new translation which we call the *Authorized* or *King James* version.

The play is shot through and through with belief in witchcraft of the most dire and devilish kind; and, only a few years before, James had proved his sympathy with this belief by writing a book called *Daemonologie*, which, in the form of a dialogue, displays "all kinds of spirits and Spectres that appears and troubles persons;" and then had showed how much he was in earnest by having hundreds and hundreds of old women burned to death for witchcraft.

Finally, the whole tragic burden of the play was the terrible fate that avenges the murder of a king; and if ever there was a monarch who feared for his life, it was King James.

No wonder that the company of actors which presented Shakespeare's plays, and of which he himself was one, was the pet company of the King, and under his patronage gained a position of supremacy in the theatrical world

which lasted forty years. It cost ten pounds to have a performance at Court, and King James's exchequer was sometimes the poorer, and "The King's Men's" richer, by two hundred pounds when Shrovetide came and the season closed.

### THE METRE

The first perfectly normal blank-verse line in the play is (I, II, 13):

Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied.

The quality of this line is analyzed as follows: It has ten syllables, constituting five *feet*, the second syllable of each foot receiving the stress.

In the same Scene, within the first 35 lines, are to be found examples of the chief exceptions to the normal metre. Sometimes the accent is shifted from the second to the first syllable of the foot, as in line 4:

Who like a good and hardy soldier fought

Sometimes this shift occurs in the midst of the line, as in line 1:

What bloody man is that? He can report

There is occasionally an extra syllable, as in line 8, at the end:

As two spent swimmers that do cling together

or in line 22 in the course of the line:

Till he unseamed him from the nave to the chaps

A syllable or more may be lacking, as in line 20:

Till he faced the slave

or in line 5:

Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!

The lacking syllables are usually to be explained by what is called *dramatic pause*. In line 28, as in line 5, above, this pause occurs in the midst of the line, and may be made very significant by the actor:

Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark.

It not infrequently happens that the demands of the metre require what to modern ears seems to be a special accent or pronunciation, though this may have been the usual one in 1605. Note the five syllables in the last word in line 18, ex-e-cut-i-on, (L. *executio*);

Which smoked with bloody execution

Also the three syllables in the word *captains* in line 34, cap-i-tains (L. *caput, itis*):

Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo? Yes

Other examples of this peculiarity are noted as they occur, and others still are left to the sense of the reader. To fail to discern them is one of the ways of spoiling the classic line.

Another principle of pronunciation that is important to

bear in mind is the obscuring of certain syllables, so that words like *heaven*, *spirit*, and *hover* are pronounced as single syllables.

Sometimes the verse is broken by the dialogue into several partial lines. Line 3, for example, consists of two such parts:

The newest state.

This is the sergeant.

An examination of the 35 lines under consideration will show that some end with a mark of punctuation (*end-stopped*), while others run on into the next line (*run-on*). The latter sort testify to great freedom in composition, and the flexibility thus imparted to the dialogue should not be lost in the reading. The blank verse of Shakespeare is to be read as poetry, of course, but the pauses which the poet himself has insisted upon by entering marks of punctuation are almost sufficient, so far as the ends of verses are concerned. The pauses which good sense suggests in addition to those marked, are likely to be found in the midst of the verse itself. They constitute what is called the *caesura*, or cut, in the line. In line 1, this cut occurs at the question mark; but in line 4 the pause should come before, not after, *fought*.

Occasionally, that is, twenty-odd times in the whole play, are found lines of twelve syllables and six beats. They are called *Alexandrines*, and usually give an effect of peculiar strength or finality.

Turning back to Scene I of the first Act, we find a different metre used by the Witches. It consists of such lines as:

When shall we three meet again

in which we discover four accents, but only seven syllables, rhymed in couplets. The normal line of those parts of the play in which the witches speak is thus regularly lacking an unaccented syllable. Some scholars consider that it is the first of the line which has been cut off, and others that it is the end. There is no way of coming to a final conclusion except by the ear, and that is naturally an individual authority.

In the speeches of Hecate the metre is complete, eight syllables, with the stress on the second syllable of each foot. The second line in the play happens to be in this metre, but is an exception in the parts of the Weird Sisters. In their speeches in the third Scene of Act I, there are blank-verse lines—a great exception, but for a purpose which is obvious.

The essential fact to remember in reading the witches' parts is that they were intended by Shakespeare to impress the audience with an effect of supernatural knowledge and power. They have the monotony and the strongly marked accent, almost sing-song, of an incantation. Every word should be spoken as if it had just been sent from the mysterious world below. If there is grotesqueness, it is satanic; if there is prophecy, the omens are ill; if the words sound fair, one may be sure they are really false and foul, and should be read with that conviction.

#### DICTION

In an essay of Henry I. Ruggles, Esq., of Poughkeepsie, occurs a unique study of the words of Shakespeare used in

this play. His way was to take some general thought, such as *welfare*, and see what words kindred to this general word are found in the play. Related to the idea of *welfare*, he found: *well, happy, riches, prosperous, seasons, fulness, store, harvest, peace, content, comfort, pleasure, success, interest, profit, advantage*, etc. Related to the idea of *hospitality*, he found: *host, guest, stranger, welcome, banquet, feast, food, eat, drink, meal, lodger, inn*, etc. Related to *religion* he found: *angel, cherubin, the Lord, God, Christendom, life to come, mine eternal jewel, common enemy of man, the devil, Beelzebub, Golgotha*, etc.

The number of groups of related words to be gathered together would be almost unlimited, and under some heads, such as *communication*, or *revolt*, or *deception*, or *power* a great harvest of terms could be reaped. The advantage would be two-fold to the student who gave intelligent effort to such a research. He would enlarge his own vocabulary, and, at the same time, convince himself of the richness of Shakespeare's, which is incomparably the greatest in the world of letters.

#### THE THEATRE IN SHAKESPEARE'S DAY

The theatre in which Shakespeare was chiefly interested, both financially and artistically, was the *Globe*. "The Globe was first erected in 1593 by Richard Burbage, leader of the Lord Chamberlain's, or King's, Men. It stood on the Bankside. Street, a builder, was engaged to construct it of timber. The theatre was hexagon-shaped externally, and round within. It had two doors, one leading into the body of the house, the other into the actors' tire-room. It was open to the air, with the exception of a

thatched roof or 'heaven,' projecting over the stage. The audience stood in the large central place or 'yard,' which was railed off from the stage. Private boxes were provided round this yard, for such as chose to pay for them. This primitive theatre, forever famous as the scene of Shakespeare's exploits, was burned down in 1613 during the performance of a play upon the history of the reign of Henry VIII. Two small guns, it appears, were let off in the course of a pageant, and their discharge set fire to the thatched roof of the heaven.

"To form an accurate and lively picture of an Elizabethan stage-performance is not easy from the meagre references which we now possess. Yet something of the sort might be attempted. Let us imagine that the red-lettered play-bill of a new tragedy has been hung out beneath the picture of Dame Fortune. The flag is flying from the roof. The drums have beaten, and the trumpets are sounding for the second time. It is three o'clock upon an afternoon of summer. We pass through the great door, ascend some steps, take our key from the pocket of our trunk-hose, and let ourselves into our private room upon the first or lowest tier. We find ourselves in a low square building, open to the slanting sunlight, built of shabby wood, not unlike a circus; smelling of sawdust and the breath of people. The yard below is crowded with 'sixpenny mechanics,' and prentices in greasy leathern jerkins, servants in blue frieze with their masters' badges on their shoulders, boys and grooms, elbowing each other for bare standing ground and passing coarse jests on their neighbors. A similar crowd is in the twopenny room about our heads, except that here are a few flaunting

girls. Not many women of respectability are visible, though two or three have taken a side-box, from which they lean forward to exchange remarks with the gallants on the stage. Five or six young men are already seated there before the curtain, playing cards and cracking nuts to while away the time. A boy goes up and down among them, offering various qualities of tobacco for sale, and furnishing lights for the smokers. The stage itself is strewn with rushes; and from the jutting tiled roof of the shadow, supported by a couple of stout wooden pillars, carved into satyrs at the top, hangs a curtain of tawny-coloured silk. This is drawn when the trumpets have sounded for the third time; and an actor in a black velvet mantle, with a crown of bays upon his flowing wig, struts forward bowing to the audience for attention. He is the Prologue. He has barely broken into the jogtrot of his declamation, when a bustle is heard behind, and a fine fellow comes shouldering past him from the tire-room followed by a mincing page.

“‘A stool, boy!’ cries our courtier, flinging off his cloak, and displaying a doublet of white satin and hose of blue silk. The Prologue has to stand aside, and falters in his speech. The groundlings hiss, groan, mew like cats, and howl out, ‘Filthy! filthy!’ It may also happen that an apple is flung upon the stage, to notify the people’s disapproval of this interruption. Undisturbed by these discourtesies, however, the newcomer twirls his moustachios, fingers his sword-hilt, and nods to his acquaintance. After compliments to the gentlemen already seated, the gallant at last disposes himself in a convenient place of observation, and the Prologue ends. The first act

now begins. There is nothing but the rudest scenery: a battlemented city-wall behind the stage, with a placard hung out upon it, indicating that the scene is Rome. As the play proceeds, this figure of a town makes way for some wooden rocks and a couple of trees, to signify the Hyrcanian forest. A damsel, with a close-shaved chin, wanders alone in this wood, lamenting her sad case. Suddenly a cardboard dragon is thrust from the sides upon the stage, and she takes to flight. (Actresses were never seen upon the stage. Beardless youths 'boyed the greatness' of Cleopatra and Lady Macbeth. Hobbled-hoys 'squeaked' out the pathos of Desdemona and Juliet's passion. Sometimes beard and broken voice were only too apparent.) The first act closes with a speech from an old gentleman arrayed in antique robes, whose white beard flows down upon his chest. He is the Chorus; and it is his business to explain what has happened to the damsel, and how in the next act her son, a sprightly youth of eighteen years, will conquer kingdoms. During the course of the play, music is made use of for the recreation of the audience with songs and ditties, and much attention is bestowed upon the costly dresses of the principal performers. Meanwhile, a cut-purse has been found plying his trade in the yard. It is a diversion in the interval between the acts, to see him hoisted with many a cuff and kick to the stage. There he is tied tightly to one of the pillars, and left to linger the performance out against his will—literally pilloried—pelted and scoffed at when the audience have nothing else to do. The show concludes with a Prayer for the Queen's Majesty, uttered by the actors on their knees." (Symonds.)

## STAGE INTERPRETATION OF MACBETH

*The staging of the play in the reader's mind* is essential to an appreciation of it. The following brief descriptions of the way in which actors and managers have treated *Macbeth*, have been selected and adapted from many different sources. (See List of Authorities. *Quotation marks must largely be understood.*)

*David Garrick*

Garrick's dress for Macbeth was the uniform of a British army-officer of his day—a scarlet or sky-blue coat ornamented with gold lace, snug white breeches, top-boots, and a powdered wig.

Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard used a version of *Macbeth* much more like Shakespeare's than the corrupt one made by Sir William Davenant which had been substituted by all actors for seventy years. But many singing witches were employed in their representation, pretty women, arrayed in fantastic comic attire—plaited caps, laced aprons, red stomachers, ruffs, and mittens. And Garrick added a long “dying-speech” of his own composition.

When Garrick, in Italy in 1763, was asked by a certain prince to show his skill in the art of expression, he immediately assumed the position and demeanor of Macbeth when seeing the dagger in the air, and repeated the accompanying soliloquy—all with astonishing effect.

When Mrs. Pritchard played Lady Macbeth, the utterance of the words, “Give *me* the daggers!” is said to have sent such a thrill through the audience as none else could produce; while, in the sleep-walking scene, the horror

of her sigh was such as to make the young remember it with trembling. Throughout the Banquet Scene, Mrs. Pritchard's conduct was most natural and gracious, but at last, with a look of anger and indignation which could not be suppressed, she seized her trembling husband by the arm and whispered in terror and contempt, "Are you a man?" The action roused the house to a whirlwind of applause.

*Charles Macklin*

Charles Macklin first played *Macbeth* in 1772, when he was eighty-two years old. The garments and appurtenances used by Macklin were Scotch, and the example thus set has ever since been followed.

*John Philip Kemble and Mrs. Siddons*

Kemble's costume for *Macbeth* was composed mostly of a short woolen coat, a belted plaid over ring-mail, and a cap with tall heavy nodding black plumes in it. One night when he was to act the part, he was visited in his dressing-room by Sir Walter Scott, who with his own hands took the "undertaker's cushion" out of the cap, and inserted in its place an eagle's feather which he had brought.

Mrs. Siddons, who was Kemble's sister, had magnificent physical advantages for the impersonation of Lady *Macbeth*—a majestic form, a powerful voice, and a grand manner.

She was only twenty when (1779) she was first called on to play Lady *Macbeth*. Here is part of her own story of her preparation for that performance. "On the night

preceding that on which I was to appear, I shut myself up when all the family were retired, and commenced my study of *Lady Macbeth*. I went on with tolerable composure, in the silence of the night, till I came to the assassination scene, when the horrors of the scene rose to such a degree as made it impossible for me to get farther. I snatched up my candle and hurried out of the room in a paroxysm of terror. My dress was silk, and the rustling of it, as I ascended the stairs, seemed to my panic-struck fancy like the movement of a spectre pursuing me. At last I reached my room, and threw myself on my bed without daring even to take off my clothes."

When, six years later, Mrs. Siddons was to act *Lady Macbeth* in *Drury Lane*, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who was manager, protested with tears in his eyes that for *Lady Macbeth to set down her candle*, as Mrs. Siddons proposed to do while washing the blood from her hand, was a presumptuous innovation and would ruin the performance, if not the Theatre. But the Siddons was not to be persuaded, and the innovation was received with applause. Then the great manager came to Mrs. Siddons and frankly congratulated her on her obstinacy.

Kemble tried hard to get the audience before whom he was once presenting *Macbeth* in Bristol, to accept another innovation, equally sensible. He tried to do away with the absurd tradition which made the witches in their conical caps and high-heeled shoes jump over broomsticks. But the sturdy citizens of Bristol stood up and howled till the solemn horseplay was enacted.

In another and more important effort of this kind, however, Kemble was successful. He was the first to

dispense with the actual ghost of Banquo. From Shakespeare's own time the custom had been for Banquo to walk on, his head gory and his throat gashed and bleeding, seat himself at the table, gaze at Macbeth, and indicate by a gesture his bloodstained neck. Kemble, at "Here is a place reserved, sir," saw the spectre *in the empty chair*, and his action is said to have been thrilling in its effect. The precedent thus set was followed by Macready, by Edwin Booth, and, though not at first, by Irving.

It certainly seems more natural for the great actor who impersonates Macbeth to be able to depict a ghost who is invisible, than for all the rest of the company to act as if they could *not see* an actual person who is really quite visible both to them and to the audience.

#### *Edmund Kean*

Of Edmund Kean, who in 1814 restored the play to its Shakespearian simplicity, Hazlitt says, "The manner in which, in the Murder Scene, his voice clung to his throat and choked his utterance beggared description."

At the close of the play, in the Combat Scene, he paused to vaunt his invulnerability,—*"I bear a charmed life,"* and then stood for a moment with a terrific and deadly glare, as though petrified, on hearing Macduff's answer, *"Despair thy charm."*

Sir Henry Irving considered Kean England's greatest tragedian.

#### *William Charles Macready*

In all those passages in the play which involved the element of the preternatural, Macready particularly.

excelled. Yet even that scrupulously scholar-like actor would make his appearance, after the murder of King Duncan, in a flowered chintz dressing-gown!

*Edwin Booth*

Edwin Booth took a high poetic view of the character of Macbeth, and, as his genius was tragic, his appearance romantic, his action superb, and his elocution perfect, he gave a magnificent performance. His acute comprehension of Macbeth's nature and of the spirit of the tragedy was particularly exhibited in his thrilling utterance of those speeches which abound with weird imaginative figures and phrases,—night's yawning peal, the rooky wood,\* the shard-borne beetle, the sentinel wolf, the silent horror, the walking shadow, the winds that fight against the churches,—figures and phrases expressing baleful omen and shuddering dread. His embodiment of Macbeth was the most poetic that has been seen in our time. (This comment, like many of the others here quoted, is substantially from the pen of that greatest of American critics of actors and the stage—William Winter.) Booth's eloquent delivery of the blank-verse was full, resonant, melodious, sustained; and the verse was made to seem the language of nature, without ever being degraded to the colloquial level of prose and common life. His listeners heard from his lips the perfect music of the English tongue.

*Charlotte Cushman*

The most imperial representation of Lady Macbeth in the Nineteenth Century was Charlotte Cushman's. Her first

appearance in that part was made in 1835, at New Orleans. In her artistic method there was no defect. She embodied the character; she seemed to live it. A lurid horror was spread over the whole performance. Essentially poetic it was, in spite of its ferocity. Art could do no more toward making actual the "sightless substances that wait on nature's mischief" than it did in her wonderful demeanor, gesture, and tones of voice. Her crouching against the door-post of the chamber in which the midnight murder is afoot, was indescribably awful, and it has not passed from the memories of those who saw it. She was nobly authoritative in the Banquet Scene, and she harrowed the heart in depicting the anguish of the sleep-walker, whose guilty conscience is hounding her into death and hell.

*Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry*

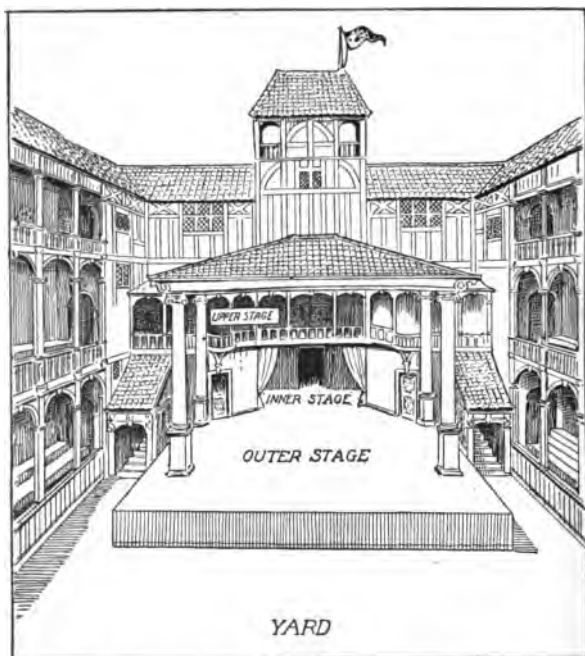
The realm of consciousness—the haunted mind, the agonized spirit, the tremulous human will—is the particular realm in which Henry Irving preëminently reigned; and accordingly in the weird scenes,—the meeting with the witches, the doing of the murder, the vision of "the blood-boltered Banquo," the awful desolation at the close of the Banquet Scene, and the visit to the Weird Sisters—he was entirely great.

In his dressing, Irving considered poetic effect rather than historical accuracy. He wore tawny red hair and a long, drooping mustache of the same color; and he made much use of picturesque, draped cloaks, garments which he wore with the utmost grace. In the closing scene, he was clad in complete armor that

made the doomed King gleam from afar like a tower of gold.

At the end of the Banquet Scene, after the courtiers have withdrawn, he would move towards the back of the stage, where there were several wide shallow steps, the Queen (Miss Terry) walking at his right and assisting him. When the steps were reached the Queen ascended so as to be a little above him, and he paused, his extended right arm resting in her grasp; and after a moment, as though by horrible, irresistible compulsion, he slowly turned till his gaze could settle on the empty stool, at which he looked with an awful glare of terror, his eyes growing wide and wild, and through contraction of the facial muscles, his long mustache fairly bristling with fright. This picture, over which the curtain descended, was afflicting and terrible.

Miss Terry's portrayal of Lady Macbeth's poignant remorse was profoundly truthful and irresistibly affecting. She excelled in the expression of bleak, hopeless misery in the closing moments of the Banquet Scene, and in the agony of the Sleep-walking Scene. Her appearance, in rich raiment befitting a queen was stately and exceedingly beautiful. She wore a close-fitting green robe, encircled by a jeweled girdle, and a voluminous blue mantle, with long, wideflowing sleeves. Her hair was golden-red, abundant, and worn in two very long, heavy braids falling on either side of her face.



Interior of Fortune Theatre

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**THE  
TRAGEDY OF MACBETH**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DUNCAN, *king of Scotland.*

MALCOLM,  
DONALBAIN, } *his sons.*

MACBETH,  
BANQUO, } *generals of the King's army.*

MACDUFF,  
LENNOX,  
ROSS,  
MENTEITH,  
ANGUS,  
CAITHNESS, } *noblemen of Scotland.*

FLEANCE, *son to Banquo.*

SIWARD, *earl of Northumberland, general of the English forces.*

Young SIWARD, *his son.*

SEYTON, *an officer attending on Macbeth.*

Boy, *son to Macduff.*

An English Doctor.

A Scotch Doctor.

A Sergeant.

A Porter.

An Old Man.

Lady MACBETH.

Lady MACDUFF.

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

HECATE.

Three Witches.

Apparitions.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers,  
Attendants, and Messengers.

SCENE: *Scotland; England.*

# THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

## ACT I

### SCENE I. *A desert place*

*Thunder and lightning. Enter three WITCHES*

*First Witch.* When shall we three meet again  
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

*Sec. Witch.* When the hurlyburly's done,  
When the battle's lost and won.

*Third Witch.* That will be ere the set of sun.

*First Witch.* Where the place?

*Sec. Witch.* Upon the heath.

*Third Witch.* There to meet with Macbeth.

*First Witch.* I come, Graymalkin.

*All.* Paddock calls:—anon!

Fair is foul, and foul is fair 10  
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II

*A camp near Forres*

*Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,  
LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant*

*Dun.* What bloody man is that? He can report,

As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.

*Mal.* This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!  
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil  
As thou didst leave it.

*Ser.* Doubtful it stood;  
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together  
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—  
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that 10  
The multiplying villanies of nature  
Do swarm upon him—from the Western Isles  
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied;  
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,  
Show'd like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak:  
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—  
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,  
Which smoked with bloody execution,  
Like valor's minion carved out his passage  
Till he faced the slave; 20  
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,  
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,  
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

*Dun.* O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

*Ser.* As whence the sun 'gins his reflection  
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,  
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come  
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:  
No sooner justice had, with valor arm'd,  
Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels, 30

But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,  
With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men  
Began a fresh assault.

*Dun.* Dismay'd not this  
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

*Ser.* Yes;  
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.  
If I say sooth, I must report they were  
As cannons overcharged with double cracks;  
So they  
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe.  
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds, 40  
Or memorize another Golgotha,  
I cannot tell—  
But I am faint; my gashes cry for help.

*Dun.* So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;  
They smack of honor both. Go get him surgeons.  
[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*]

Who comes here?

*Enter Ross*

*Mal.* The worthythane of Ross.

*Len.* What a haste looks through his eyes! So should  
he look!

That seems to speak things strange.

*Ross.* God save the king!

*Dun.* Whence camest thou, worthythane?

*Ross.* From Fife, great king;

Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky 50

And fan our people cold.

Norway himself, with terrible numbers,

Assisted by that most disloyal traitor  
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;  
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapp'd in proof,  
Confronted him with self-comparisons,  
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,  
Curbing his lavish spirit; and, to conclude,  
The victory fell on us.

*Dun.* Great happiness!

*Ross.* That now

60

Sweno, the Norway's king, craves composition;  
Nor would we deign him burial of his men  
Till he disbursed, at Saint Colme's Inch,  
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

*Dun.* No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive  
Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present death,  
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

*Ross.* I'll see it done.

*Dun.* What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III

*A heath*

*Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES*

*First Witch.* Where hast thou been, sister?

*Sec. Witch.* Killing swine.

*Third Witch.* Sister, where thou?

*First Witch.* A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,  
And munch'd, and munch'd, and munch'd. "Give  
me," quoth I.

"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger;  
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,  
And, like a rat without a tail,  
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

10

*Sec. Witch.* I'll give thee a wind.

*First Witch.* Thou'rt kind.

*Third Witch.* And I another.

*First Witch.* I myself have all the other,

And the very ports they blow,  
All the quarters that they know  
I' the shipman's card.

I will drain him dry as hay.  
Sleep shall neither night nor day  
Hang upon his pent-house lid;  
He shall live a man forbid.

20

Weary se'nnights nine times nine  
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.  
Though his bark cannot be lost,  
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.  
Look what I have.

*Sec. Witch.* Show me, show me.

*First Witch.* Here I have a pilot's thumb,  
Wrecked as homeward he did come.

[*Drum within.*

*Third Witch.* A drum, a drum!

30

Macbeth doth come.

*All.* The weird sisters, hand in hand,  
Posters of the sea and land,  
Thus do go about, about:  
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,  
And thrice again, to make up nine.  
Peace! the charm's wound up.

*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO*

*Macb.* So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

*Ban.* How far is't called to Forres? What are these  
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire, 40  
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,  
And yet are on 't? Live you? or are you aught  
That man may question? You seem to understand  
me,  
By each at once her choppy finger laying  
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,  
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.

*Macb.* Speak, if you can. What are you?

*First Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of  
Glamis!

*Sec. Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of  
Cawdor!

*Third Witch.* All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king here-  
after! 50

*Ban.* Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear  
Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,  
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed  
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner  
You greet with present grace and great prediction  
Of noble having and of royal hope,  
That he seems rapt withal; to me you speak not.  
If you can look into the seeds of time,  
And say which grain will grow and which will not,  
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear 60  
Your favors nor your hate.

*First Witch.* Hail!

*Sec. Witch.* Hail!

*Third Witch.* Hail!

*First Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

*Sec. Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.

*Third Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

*First Witch.* Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

*Macb.* Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more. 70

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;

But how of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor lives,

A prosperous gentleman; and to be king

Stands not within the prospect of belief,

No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence

You owe this strange intelligence? or why

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way

With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

[*Witches vanish.*]

*Ban.* The earth hath bubbles as the water has,

And these are of them: whither are they vanish'd? 80

*Macb.* Into the air, and what seem'd corporal melted

As breath into the wind. Would they had stayed!

*Ban.* Were such things here as we do speak about?

Or have we eaten on the insane root

That takes the reason prisoner?

*Macb.* Your children shall be kings.

*Ban.* You shall be king.

*Macb.* And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

*Ban.* To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

*Enter Ross and Angus*

*Ross.* The king hath happily received, Macbeth,  
The news of thy success; and when he reads 90  
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,  
His wonders and his praises do contend  
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that,  
In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,  
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,  
Nothing afraid of what thyself didst make,  
Strange images of death. As thick as hail  
Came post with post, and every one did bear  
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence  
And pour'd them down before him.

*Ang.* We are sent 100  
To give thee, from our royal master, thanks;  
Only to herald thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.

*Ross.* And for an earnest of a greater honor,  
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor:  
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!  
For it is thine.

*Ban.* What, can the devil speak true?

*Macb.* The thane of Cawdor lives; why do you dress me  
In borrow'd robes?

*Ang.* Who was the thane lives yet  
But under heavy judgment bears that life 110  
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was com-  
bined

With those of Norway, or did line the rebel  
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both

He labor'd in his country's wreck, I know not;  
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,  
Have overthrown him.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Glamis, and thane of Cawdor:  
The greatest is behind—

Thanks for your pains—  
Do you not hope your children shall be kings,  
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me  
Promised no less to them?

*Ban.* That, trusted home, 120  
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,  
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange:  
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,  
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,  
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's  
In deepest consequence.  
Cousins, a word, I pray you.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Two truths are told,  
As happy prologues to the swelling act  
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.  
[*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting 130  
Cannot be ill; cannot be good. If ill,  
Why hath it given me earnest of success,  
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor.  
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion  
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair  
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,  
Against the use of nature? Present fears  
Are less than horrible imaginings.  
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,  
Shakes so my single state of man that function 140

Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is  
But what is not.

*Ban.* Look, how our partner's rapt.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] If chance will have me king, why, chance  
may crown me,  
Without my stir.

*Ban.* New honors come upon him,  
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould  
But with the aid of use.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Come what come may,  
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

*Ban.* Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

*Macb.* Give me your favor; my dull brain was wrought  
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains  
Are register'd where every day I turn 150  
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.  
Think upon what hath chanced and at more time,  
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak  
Our free hearts each to other.

*Ban.* Very gladly.

*Macb.* Till then, enough. Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

*Forres. The palace*

*Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LEN-  
NOX, and Attendants*

*Dun.* Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not  
Those in commission yet return'd?

*Mal.* My liege,

They are not yet come back. But I have spoke  
With one that saw him die, who did report  
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,  
Implored your highness' pardon and set forth  
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it. He died  
As one that had been studied in his death  
To throw away the dearest thing he owed 10  
As 't were a careless trifle.

*Dun.* There's no art  
To find the mind's construction in the face:  
He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

*Enter* MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, *and* ANGUS

O worthiest cousin!  
The sin of my ingratitude even now  
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before,  
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow  
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less-deserved,  
That the proportion both of thanks and payment  
Might have been mine! Only I have left to say, 20  
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

*Macb.* The service and the loyalty I owe,  
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part  
Is to receive our duties; and our duties  
Are to your throne and state children and servants;  
Which do but what they should, by doing everything  
Safe toward your love and honor.

*Dun.* Welcome hither:  
I have begun to plant thee, and will labor

To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,  
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known 30  
No less to have done so, let me infold thee  
And hold thee to my heart.

*Ban.* There if I grow,  
The harvest is your own.

*Dun.* My plenteous joys,  
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves  
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,  
And you whose places are the nearest, know,  
We will establish our estate upon  
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter  
The Prince of Cumberland; which honor must  
Not unaccompanied invest him only, 40  
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine  
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,  
And bind us further to you.

*Macb.* The rest is labor, which is not used for you.  
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful  
The hearing of my wife with your approach;  
So humbly take my leave.

*Dun.* My worthy Cawdor!

*Macb.* [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step  
On which I must fall down or else o'erleap,  
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires; 50  
Let not light see my black and deep desires;  
The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be  
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see. [*Exit.*

*Dun.* True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant,  
And in his commendations I am fed;  
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,

Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome;  
It is a peerless kinsman. [Flourish. *Exeunt.*

## SCENE V

*Inverness. Macbeth's castle*

*Enter LADY MACBETH, reading a letter*

*Lady M.* "They met me in the day of success; and  
I have learned by the perfectest report, they  
have more in them than mortal knowledge.  
When I burned in desire to question them fur-  
ther, they made themselves air, into which they  
vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder  
of it, came missives from the king, who all-hailed  
me 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which title, before,  
these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me  
to the coming on of time, with 'Hail, king that 10  
shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver  
thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou  
mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being  
ignorant of what greatness is promised thee.  
Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."  
Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be  
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature;  
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness  
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great,  
Art not without ambition, but without 20  
The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst  
highly,

That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,  
And yet wouldst wrongly win. Thou 'ldst have,  
great Glamis,  
That which cries, "Thus thou must do, if thou have  
it;

And that which rather thou dost fear to do  
Than wishest should be undone." Hie thee hither  
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,  
And chastise with the valor of my tongue  
All that impedes thee from the golden round  
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem 30  
To have thee crowned withal.

*Enter a MESSENGER*

What is your tidings?

*Mess.* The king comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* Thou 'rt mad to say it!

Is not thy master with him? who, were 't so,  
Would have inform'd for preparation.

*Mess.* So please you, it is true; our thane is coming.

One of my fellows had the speed of him,  
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more  
Than would make up his message.

*Lady M.* Give him tending;

He brings great news. *[Exit Messenger.*

The raven himself is hoarse  
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan 40  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,  
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full  
Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood,

Stop up the access and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between  
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,  
Wherever in your sightless substances 50  
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,  
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,  
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,  
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,  
To cry "Hold, hold!"

*Enter* MACBETH

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!  
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!  
Thy letters have transported me beyond  
This ignorant present, and I feel now  
The future in the instant.

*Macb.* My dearest love,  
Duncan comes here to-night.

*Lady M.* And when goes hence? 60

*Macb.* To-morrow, as he purposes.

*Lady M.* O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!  
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men  
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,  
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,  
Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent  
flower,

But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming  
Must be provided for; and you shall put

This night's great business into my dispatch,  
Which shall to all our nights and days to come 70  
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

*Macb.* We will speak further.

*Lady M.* Only look up clear;

To alter favor ever is to fear.

Leave all the rest to me. [Exeunt.]

#### SCENE VI

##### *Before Macbeth's castle*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants*

*Dun.* This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself  
Unto our gentle senses.

*Ban.* This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve  
By his loved mansionry that the heaven's breath  
Smells wooingly here; no jutty, frieze,  
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird  
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle.  
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed  
The air is delicate.

##### *Enter LADY MACBETH*

*Dun.* See, see, our honored hostess! 10  
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,

Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you  
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,  
And thank us for your trouble.

*Lady M.* All our service  
In every point twice done, and then done double,  
Were poor and single business to contend  
Against those honors deep and broad wherewith  
Your majesty loads our house. For those of old,  
And the late dignities heaped up to them,  
We rest your hermits.

*Dun.* Where's the thane of Cawdor? 20  
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose  
To be his purveyor; but he rides well,  
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him  
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,  
We are your guest to-night.

*Lady M.* Your servants ever  
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,  
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,  
Still to return your own.

*Dun.* Give me your hand;  
Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly,  
And shall continue our graces towards him. 30  
By your leave, hostess. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE VII

*Macbeth's castle*

*Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer, and divers Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter MACBETH*

*Macb.* If it were done when 't is done, then 't were well  
It were done quickly. If the assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,  
With his surcease, success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We 'ld jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgment here, that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which being taught return  
To plague the inventor. This even-handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice  
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:  
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,  
Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
The deep damnation of his taking-off; 20  
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,  
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin horsed  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,

Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur  
To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
And falls on the other—

*Enter LADY MACBETH*

How now! what news?

*Lady M.* He has almost supped. Why have you left the chamber?

*Macb.* Hath he asked for me?

*Lady M.* Know you not he has? 30

*Macb.* We will proceed no further in this business.

He hath honored me of late; and I have bought  
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,  
Not cast aside so soon.

*Lady M.* Was the hope drunk  
Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?  
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale  
At what it did so freely? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard  
To be the same in thine own act and valor 40  
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that  
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
And live a coward in thine own esteem,  
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"  
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

*Macb.* Prithee, peace!

I dare do all that may become a man;  
Who dares do more is none.

*Lady M.*

What beast was 't then

That made you break this enterprise to me?  
 When you durst do it, then you were a man;  
 And, to be more than what you were, you would 50  
 Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place  
 Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.  
 They have made themselves, and that their fitness  
 now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know  
 How tender 't is to love the babe that milks me;  
 I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
 And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
 Have done to this.

*Macb.*

If we should fail?

*Lady M.*

We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place, 60  
 And we 'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—  
 Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey  
 Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains  
 Will I with wine and wassail so convince,  
 That memory, the warder of the brain,  
 Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
 A limbec only. When in swinish sleep  
 Their drenched natures lie as in a death,  
 What cannot you and I perform upon  
 The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon 70  
 His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt  
 Of our great quell?

*Macb.*

Bring forth men-children only;

For thy undaunted mettle should compose

Nothing but males. Will it not be received,  
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two  
Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers,  
That they have done 't?

*Lady M.* Who dares receive it other,  
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar  
Upon his death?

*Macb.* I am settled, and bend up  
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat. 80  
Away, and mock the time with fairest show;  
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.  
[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT II

### SCENE I

*Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle*

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him*

*Ban.* How goes the night, boy?

*Fle.* The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

*Ban.* And she goes down at twelve.

*Fle.* I take 't, 't is later, sir.

*Ban.* Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;

Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.

A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,

And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,

Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature

Gives way to in repose!

*Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch*

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

10

*Macb.* A friend.

*Ban.* What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed.

He hath been in unusual pleasure, and

Sent forth great largess to your offices.

This diamond he greets your wife withal,

By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up

In measureless content.

*Macb.* Being unprepared,

Our will became the servant to defect,  
Which else should free have wrought.

*Ban.* All's well.

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters; 20  
To you they have show'd some truth.

*Macb.* I think not of them;  
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
We would spend it in some words upon that business,  
If you would grant the time.

*Ban.* At your kind'st leisure.

*Macb.* If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,  
It shall make honor for you.

*Ban.* So I lose none  
In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,  
I shall be counsell'd.

*Macb.* Good repose the while!

*Ban.* Thanks, sir; the like to you! 30

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*]

*Macb.* Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

[*Exit Servant.*]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch  
thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable

As this which now I draw.  
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going,  
And such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,  
Or else worth all the rest. I see thee still;  
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There's no such thing.  
It is the bloody business which informs  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world  
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse 50  
The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Hecate's offerings, and withered Murder,  
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,  
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design  
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,  
And take the present horror from the time,  
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he  
lives: 60  
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.  
[A bell rings.]

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.  
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [Exit.]

## SCENE II

*The same**Enter* LADY MACBETH

*Lady M.* That which hath made them drunk hath made  
me bold;

What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. Hark!  
Peace!

It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,  
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it.  
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms  
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugg'd  
their possets,  
That death and nature do contend about them,  
Whether they live or die.

*Enter* MACBETH

*Macb.* Who's there? what, ho!

*Lady M.* Alack, I am afraid they have awaked  
And 't is not done. The attempt and not the deed  
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;  
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled  
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

My husband!

*Macb.* I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

*Lady M.* I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.  
Did not you speak?

*Macb.* When?

*Lady M.* Now.

*Macb.*

As I descended?

*Lady M.* Ay.

*Macb.* Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

*Lady M.*

Donalbain.

*Macb.* This is a sorry sight. [Looking on his hands. 20

*Lady M.* A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

*Macb.* There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried  
"Murder!"

That they did wake each other. I stood and heard  
them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd them  
Again to sleep.

*Lady M.*

There are two lodged together.

*Macb.* One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other,  
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands!

Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"

When they did say "God bless us!"

*Lady M.* Consider it not so deeply.

30

*Macb.* But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen?"

I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"

Stuck in my throat.

*Lady M.*

These deeds must not be thought

After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

*Macb.* Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!

Macbeth does murder sleep",— the innocent sleep,

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,

The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,

Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

*Lady M.*

What do you mean? 40

*Macb.* Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house;  
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor  
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more."

*Lady M.* Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy  
thane,

You do unbend your noble strength, to think  
So bransickly of things. Go get some water,  
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.  
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
They must lie there. Go carry them; and smear  
The sleepy grooms with blood.

*Macb.* I'll go no more. 50  
I am afraid to think what I have done;  
Look on 't again I dare not.

*Lady M.* Infirm of purpose!  
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead  
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood  
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,  
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,  
For it must seem their guilt.

[*Exit. Knocking within.*]

*Macb.* Whence is that knocking?  
How is't with me, when every noise appalls me?  
What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.  
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood 60  
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather  
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red.

*Re-enter LADY MACBETH*

*Lady M.* My hands are of your color; but I shame

To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking within.*] I hear a knocking

At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.

A little water clears us of this deed;

How easy is it, then! Your constancy

Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within.*] Hark! more knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us 70

And show us to be watchers. Be not lost

So poorly in your thoughts.

*Macb.* To know my deed, 't were best not know myself.

[*Knocking within.*]

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! [*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE III

*The same*

*Enter a PORTER. Knocking within*

*Port.* Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate, he should have old turning the key. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer, that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty. Come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for 't. [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! who's there, in th' other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against 10 either scale; who committed treason enough

for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven.  
O, come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within.*]  
Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith,  
here's an English tailor come hither, for steal-  
ing out of a French hose. Come in, tailor; here  
you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within.*]  
Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you?  
But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter  
it no further. I had thought to have let in some 20  
of all professions that go the primrose way to  
the everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within.*]  
Anon, anon. I pray you, remember the porter.  
[*Opens the gate.*]

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX*

*Macd.* Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,  
That you do lie so late?

*Port.* Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.

*Macd.* Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH*

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

*Len.* Good morrow, noble sir. [*Exit the Porter.*]

*Macb.* Good morrow, both. 30

*Macd.* Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

*Macb.* Not yet.

*Macd.* He did command me to call timely on him.

I have almost slipped the hour.

*Macb.* I'll bring you to him.

*Macd.* I know this is a joyful trouble to you;

But yet 't is one.

*Macb.* The labor we delight in physics pain.

This is the door.

*Macd.* I'll make so bold to call,

For 't is my limited service.

[*Exit.*

*Len.* Goes the king hence to-day?

*Macb.* He does;—he did appoint so.

*Len.* The night has been unruly. Where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say, 40  
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of  
death,

And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatched to the woeful time. The obscure bird  
Clamored the livelong night; some say, the earth  
Was feverous and did shake.

*Macb.* 'T was a rough night. .

*Len.* My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Re-enter MACDUFF*

*Macd.* O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart  
Cannot conceive nor name thee.

*Len.* }  
*Macb.* } What's the matter?

50

*Macd.* Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.  
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope  
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence  
The life o' the building.

*Macb.* What is 't you say? the life?

*Len.* Mean you his majesty?

*Macd.* Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight

With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak;  
See, and then speak yourselves.

*[Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.]*

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum-bell. Murder and treason!  
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake! 60  
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,  
And look on death itself! Up, up, and see  
The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!  
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,  
To countenance this horror. Ring the bell.

*[Bell rings.]*

*Enter LADY MACBETH*

*Lady M.* What's the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley  
The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

*Macd.* O gentle lady,  
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak;  
The repetition, in a woman's ear, 70  
Would murder as it fell.

*Enter BANQUO*

O Banquo, Banquo!

Our royal master's murdered.

*Lady M.* Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

*Ban.* Too cruel any where.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,  
And say it is not so.

*Re-enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS*

*Macb.* Had I but died an hour before this chance,  
I had lived a blessed time; for from this instant  
There's nothing serious in mortality.  
All is but toys; renown and grace is dead;  
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees 80  
Is left this vault to brag of.

*Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN*

*Don.* What is amiss?

*Macb.* You are, and do not know 't.

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.

*Macd.* Your royal father's murdered.

*Mal.* O, by whom?

*Len.* Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done 't:  
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;  
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found  
Upon their pillows.  
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life 90  
Was to be trusted with them.

*Macb.* O, yet I do repent me of my fury,  
That I did kill them.

*Macd.* Wherefore did you so?

*Macb.* Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,  
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.  
The expedition of my violent love  
Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan,  
His silver skin laced with his golden blood,  
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature

For ruin's wasteful entrance; there, the murderers, 100  
Steep'd in the colors of their trade, their daggers  
Unmannerly breech'd with gore. Who could refrain,  
That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make 's love known?

*Lady M.* Help me hence, ho!

*Macd.* Look to the lady.

*Mal.* [*Aside to Donalbain.*] Why do we hold our tongues,  
That most may claim this argument for ours?

*Don.* [*Aside to Mal.*] What should be spoken here, where  
our fate,

Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?

Let's away;

Our tears are not yet brew'd.

*Mal.* [*Aside to Don.*] Nor our strong sorrow 110  
Upon the foot of motion.

*Ban.* Look to the lady;

[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,  
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,  
And question this most bloody piece of work,  
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.  
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence  
Against the undivulged pretence I fight  
Of treasonous malice.

*Macd.* And so do I.

*All.* So all.

*Macb.* Let's briefly put on manly readiness,  
And meet i' the hall together.

*All.* Well contented. 120

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]

*Mal.* What will you do? Let's not consort with them;  
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office  
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

*Don.* To Ireland, I; our separated fortune  
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are  
There's daggers in men's smiles; the near in blood,  
The nearer bloody.

*Mal.* This murderous shaft that's shot  
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way  
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore to horse;  
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking, 130  
But shift away. There's warrant in that theft  
Which steals itself when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

##### *Outside Macbeth's castle*

*Enter ROSS with an OLD MAN*

*Old M.* Threescore and ten I can remember well;  
Within the volume of which time I have seen  
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore  
night  
Hath trifled former knowings.

*Ross.* Ah, good father,  
Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act,  
Threaten his bloody stage. By the clock 'tis day,  
And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp.  
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,  
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,

When living light should kiss it?

*Old M.* 'Tis unnatural, 10  
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last  
A falcon tow'ring in her pride of place  
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

*Ross.* And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and  
certain—

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,  
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make  
War with mankind.

*Old M.* 'Tis said they eat each other.

*Ross.* They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes,  
That look'd upon 't.

*Enter MACDUFF*

Here comes the good Macduff. 20

How goes the world, sir, now?

*Macd.* Why, see you not?

*Ross.* Is 't known who did this more than bloody deed?

*Macd.* Those that Macbeth hath slain.

*Ross.* Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

*Macd.* They were suborn'd.

Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,  
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them  
Suspicion of the deed.

*Ross.* 'Gainst nature still!

Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up  
Thine own life's means! Then 't is most like  
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth. 30

*Macd.* He is already named, and gone to Scone  
To be invested.

*Ross.* Where is Duncan's body?

*Macd.* Carried to Colmekill,  
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors  
And guardian of their bones.

*Ross.* Will you to Scone?

*Macd.* No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

*Ross.* Well, I will thither.

*Macd.* Well, may you see things well done there,—  
adieu!—

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!


*Ross.* Farewell, father.

*Old M.* God's benison go with you, and with those 40  
That would make good of bad and friends of foes!

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III

SCENE I



*Forres. The palace*

*Enter BANQUO*

*Ban.* Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
As the weird women promised, and I fear  
Thou playedst most foully for 't: yet it was said  
It should not stand in thy posterity,  
But that myself should be the root and father  
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—  
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—  
Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
May they not be my oracles as well  
And set me up in hope? But hush, no more. 10

*Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as king; LADY MACBETH,  
as queen; LENNOX, ROSS, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants*

*Macb.* Here's our chief guest.

*Lady M.* If he had been forgotten,  
It had been as a gap in our great feast,  
And all-thing unbecoming.

*Macb.* To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,  
And I'll request your presence.

*Ban.* Let your highness  
Command upon me, to the which my duties

Are with a most indissoluble tie  
For ever knit.

*Macb.* Ride you this afternoon?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord. 20

*Macb.* We should have else desired your good advice,  
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous,  
In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.  
Is 't far you ride?

*Ban.* As far, my lord, as will fill up the time  
'Twixt this and supper. Go not my horse the better,  
I must become a borrower of the night  
For a dark hour or twain.

*Macb.* Fail not our feast.

*Ban.* My lord, I will not.

*Macb.* We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed 30  
In England and in Ireland, not confessing  
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers  
With strange invention. But of that to-morrow,  
When therewithal we shall have cause of state  
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse; adieu,  
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

*Ban.* Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon's.

*Macb.* I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;  
And so I do commend you to their backs.  
Farewell. [Exit Banquo. 40

Let every man be master of his time  
Till seven at night. To make society  
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself  
Till supper-time alone; while then, God be with  
you!

[*Exeunt all but MACBETH and an Attendant.*

Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men  
Our pleasure?

*Serv.* They are, my lord, without the palace-gate.

*Macb.* Bring them before us. *[Exit Attendant.*

To be thus is nothing;

But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo  
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature 50  
Reigns that which would be fear'd. 'T is much he  
dares;

And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,  
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor  
To act in safety. There is none but he  
Whose being I do fear; and under him  
My Genius is rebuked, as it is said  
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the  
sisters,

When first they put the name of king upon me,  
And bade them speak to him; then prophet-like  
They hail'd him father to a line of kings. 60  
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown  
And put a barren scepter in my gripe,  
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,  
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,  
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;  
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;  
Put rancors in the vessel of my peace  
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel  
Given to the common enemy of man,  
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings! 70  
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,  
And champion me to the utterance! Who's there?

*Re-enter Attendant, with two MURDERERS*

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.

*[Exit Attendant.]*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

*First. Mur.* It was, so please your highness.

*Macb.*

Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know  
That it was he in the times past which held you  
So under fortune, which you thought had been  
Our innocent self. This I made good to you  
In our last conference, pass'd in probation with you, 80  
How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the in-  
struments,

Who wrought with them, and all things else that  
might

To half a soul and to a notion crazed

Say "Thus did Banquo."

*First Mur.*

You made it known to us.

*Macb.* I did so, and went further, which is now

Our point of second meeting. Do you find

Your patience so predominant in your nature,

That you can let this go? Are you so gossell'd,

To pray for this good man and for his issue,

Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave 90

And beggar'd yours for ever?

*First Mur.*

We are men, my liege.

*Macb.* Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,

As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,

Shoughs, water-rugs and demi-wolves, are clept

All by the name of dogs; the valued file

Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one  
According to the gift which bounteous nature  
Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive  
Particular addition, from the bill 100  
That writes them all alike; and so of men.  
Now, if you have a station in the file,  
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say it;  
And I will put that business in your bosoms,  
Whose execution takes your enemy off,  
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,  
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,  
Which in his death were perfect.

*Sec. Mur.* I am one, my liege,  
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world  
Have so incensed that I am reckless what 110  
I do to spite the world.

*First Mur.* And I another  
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,  
That I would set my life on any chance,  
To mend it or be rid on 't.

*Macb.* Both of you  
Know Banquo was your enemy.

*Both Mur.* True, my lord.

*Macb.* So is he mine; and in such bloody distance,  
That every minute of his being thrusts  
Against my near'st of life; and though I could  
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight  
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not, 120  
For certain friends that are both his and mine,  
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall

Who I myself struck down; and thence it is  
That I to your assistance do make love,  
Masking the business from the common eye  
For sundry weighty reasons.

*Sec. Mur.* We shall, my lord,  
Perform what you command us.

*First Mur.* Though our lives—

*Macb.* Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour  
at most

I will advise you where to plant yourselves;  
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time, 130  
The moment on 't; for 't must be done to-night,  
And something from the palace; always thought  
That I require a clearness. And with him—  
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—  
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,  
Whose absence is no less material to me  
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate  
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;  
I'll come to you anon.

*Both Mur.* We are resolved, my lord.

*Macb.* I'll call upon you straight; abide within. 140

[*Exeunt Murderers.*]

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,  
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night. [*Exit.*]

## SCENE II

*The palace*

*Enter* LADY MACBETH *and a* SERVANT

*Lady M.* Is Banquo gone from court?

*Serv.* Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

*Lady M.* Say to the king, I would attend his leisure  
For a few words.

*Serv.* Madam, I will. *[Exit.*

*Lady M.* Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content.  
'T is safer to be that which we destroy  
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

*Enter* MACBETH

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,  
Of sorriest fancies your companions making, 9  
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died  
With them they think on? Things without all  
remedy

Should be without regard; what's done is done.

*Macb.* We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it;  
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice  
Remains in danger of her former tooth.  
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds  
suffer,  
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead

Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace, 20  
Than on the torture of the mind to lie  
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.  
Treason has done his worst; nor steel, nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,  
Can touch him further.

*Lady M.*

Come on,

Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

*Macb.* So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.

Let your remembrance apply to Banquo; 30  
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue,  
Unsafe the while that we  
Must lave our honors in these flattering streams,  
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

*Lady M.*

You must leave this.

*Macb.* O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!

Thou know'st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

*Lady M.* But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

*Macb.* There's comfort yet; they are assailable.

Then be thou jocund; ere the bat hath flown 40  
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons  
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

*Lady M.*

What's to be done?

*Macb.* Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,

Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,

And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond  
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow 50  
Makes wing to the rooky wood;  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,  
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.  
Thou marvell'st at my words, but hold thee still;  
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.  
So, prithee, go with me. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE III

*A park near the palace*

*Enter three MURDERERS*

*First Mur.* But who did bid thee join with us?

*Third Mur.* Macbeth.

*Sec. Mur.* He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers  
Our offices, and what we have to do,  
To the direction just.

*First Mur.* Then stand with us;  
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.  
Now spurs the lated traveller apace  
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches  
The subject of our watch.

*Third Mur.* Hark! I hear horses.

*Ban. [Within]* Give us a light there, ho!

*Sec. Mur.* Then 't is he; the rest  
That are within the note of expectation 10  
Already are i' the court.

*First Mur.* His horses go about.

*Third Mur.* Almost a mile; but he does usually—  
So all men do—from hence to the palace gate  
Make it their walk.

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch*

*Sec. Mur.* A light, a light!

*Third Mur.* 'T is he.

*First Mur.* Stand to 't.

*Ban.* It will be rain to-night.

*First Mur.* Let it come down.

*[They set upon Banquo.]*

*Ban.* O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!

Thou mayst revenge. O slave!

*[Dies. Fleance escapes.]*

*Third Mur.* Who did strike out the light?

*First Mur.* Was 't not the way?

*Third Mur.* There's but one down; the son is fled.

*Sec. Mur.* We have lost 20

Best half of our affair.

*First Mur.* Well, let's away and say how much is done.

*[Exeunt.]*

#### SCENE IV

*Hall in the palace*

*A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH,  
ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants*

*Macb.* You know your own degrees; sit down. At first  
And last the hearty welcome.

*Lords.* Thanks to your majesty.

*Macb.* Ourself will mingle with society  
And play the humble host.  
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time,  
We will require her welcome.

*Lady M.* Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,  
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

*Enter First MURDERER to the Door*

*Macb.* See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.  
Both sides are even; here I'll sit i' the midst. 10  
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure  
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's  
blood upon thy face.

*Mur.* 'T is Banquo's then.

*Macb.* 'T is better thee without than he within.  
Is he dispatched?

*Mur.* My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

*Macb.* Thou art the best o' the cut-throats; yet he's good  
That did the like for Fleance. If thou didst it,  
Thou art the nonpareil.

*Mur.* Most royal sir,  
Fleance is 'scaped. 20

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Then comes my fit again. I had else been  
perfect,

Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,  
As broad and general as the casing air;  
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears — But Banquo's safe?

*Mur.* Ay, my good lord; safe in a ditch he bides,  
With twenty trenched gashes on his head,  
The least a death to nature.

*Macb.* Thanks for that.

[*Aside*] There the grown serpent lies. The worm  
that's fled

Hath nature that in time will venom breed, 30

No teeth for the present.—Get thee gone; to-morrow

We'll hear ourselves again. [*Exit Murderer.*]

*Lady M.* My royal lord,

You do not give the cheer. The feast is sold

That is not often vouched, while 't is a-making,

'T is given with welcome. To feed were best at home;

From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;

Meeting were bare without it.

*Macb.* Sweet remembrancer!

Now good digestion wait on appetite,

And health on both!

*Len.* May 't please your highness sit?

*The Ghost of BANQUO enters and sits in MACBETH'S place*

*Macb.* Here had we now our country's honor roofed 40

Were the graced person of our Banquo present,

Who may I rather challenge for unkindness

Than pity for mischance!

*Ross.* His absence, sir,

Lays blame upon his promise. Please 't your high-  
ness

To grace us with your royal company?

*Macb.* The table's full.

*Len.* Here is a place reserved, sir.

*Macb.* Where?

*Len.* Here, my good lord. What is 't that moves your  
highness?

*Macb.* Which of you have done this?

*Lords.*

What, my good lord?

*Macb.* Thou canst not say I did it; never shake 50

Thy gory locks at me.

*Ross.* Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.

*Lady M.* Sit, worthy friends; my lord is often thus,  
And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat;  
The fit is momentary; upon a thought  
He will again be well. If much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion.  
Feed, and regard him not—

Are you a man?

*Macb.* Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil.

*Lady M.* O proper stuff! 60

This is the very painting of your fear.

This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,  
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,  
Impostors to true fear, would well become  
A woman's story at a winter's fire,  
Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!  
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,  
You look but on a stool.

*Macb.* Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?  
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. 70  
If charnel-houses and our graves must send  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites. [Exit Ghost.

*Lady M.* What, quite unmann'd in  
folly?

*Macb.* If I stand here, I saw him.

*Lady M.* Fie, for shame!

*Macb.* Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,  
Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;  
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd  
Too terrible for the ear. The time has been,  
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,  
And there an end; but now they rise again, 80  
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,  
And push us from our stools. This is more strange  
Than such a murder is.

*Lady M.* My worthy lord,  
Your noble friends do lack you.

*Macb.* I do forget.  
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;  
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing  
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;  
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.  
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,  
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss; 90  
Would he were here! To all and him we thirst,

*Re-enter Ghost*

And all to all.

*Lords.* Our duties, and the pledge.

*Macb.* Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!  
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with!

*Lady M.* Think of this, good peers,  
But as a thing of custom; 't is no other,  
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

*Macb.* What man dare, I dare.

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, 100  
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves  
Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me  
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!  
Unreal mockery, hence! [Exit Ghost.

Why, so; being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

*Lady M.* You have displaced the mirth, broke the good  
meeting,

With most admired disorder.

*Macb.* Can such things be, 110  
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder? You make me strange  
Even to the disposition that I owe,  
When now I think you can behold such sights,  
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,  
When mine is blanch'd with fear.

*Ross.* What sights, my lord?

*Lady M.* I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;  
Question enrages him. At once, good night:  
Stand not upon the order of your going,  
But go at once.

*Len.* Good-night; and better health 120

Attend his majesty!

*Lady M.* A kind good night to all!

[Exeunt all but Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

*Macb.* It will have blood; they say blood will have blood;

Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;  
Augures and understood relations have  
By maggot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth  
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?

*Lady M.* Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

*Macb.* How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person  
At our great bidding?

*Lady M.* Did you send to him, sir?

*Macb.* I hear it by the way; but I will send. 130

There's not a one of them but in his house  
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,  
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters.  
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,  
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good  
All causes shall give way. I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.  
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,  
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd. 140

*Lady M.* You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

*Macb.* Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse  
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use;  
We are yet but young in deed. [Exeunt.]

## SCENE V

*A heath**Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES, meeting HECATE**First Witch.* Why, how now, Hecate! you look angrily.

*Hec.* Have I not reason, beldams as you are,  
Saucy and over-bold? How did you dare  
To trade and traffic with Macbeth  
In riddles and affairs of death;  
And I, the mistress of your charms,  
The close contriver of all harms,  
Was never call'd to bear my part,  
Or show the glory of our art?  
And, which is worse, all you have done 10  
Hath been but for a wayward son,  
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,  
Loves for his own ends, not for you.  
But make amends now; get you gone,  
And at the pit of Acheron  
Meet me i' the morning; thither he  
Will come to know his destiny.  
Your vessels and your spells provide,  
Your charms and every thing beside.  
I am for the air; this night I'll spend 20  
Unto a dismal and a fatal end;  
Great business must be wrought ere noon.  
Upon the corner of the moon  
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;  
I'll catch it ere it come to ground;

And that distill'd by magic sleights  
 Shall raise such artificial sprites  
 As by the strength of their illusion  
 Shall draw him on to his confusion.  
 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear 30  
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace and fear;  
 And you all know security  
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[*Music and a song within: "Come away, come away," etc.*]

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,  
 Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me. [Exit.  
*First Witch.* Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back  
 again. [Excunt.]

#### SCENE VI

*Forres. The palace*

*Enter LENNOX and another LORD*

*Len.* My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,  
 Which can interpret farther; only, I say,  
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious  
 Duncan  
 Was pitied of Macbeth; marry, he was dead:  
 And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late;  
 Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance killed,  
 For Fleance fled; men must not walk too late.  
 Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous  
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain  
 To kill their gracious father? Damned fact! 10

How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight  
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear  
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?  
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;  
For 't would have anger'd any man alive  
To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,  
He has borne all things well; and I do think  
That had he Duncan's sons under his key—  
As, an 't please heaven, he shall not—they should  
find

What 't were to kill a father; so should Fleance. 20  
But, peace! for from broad words, and 'cause he failed  
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,  
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell  
Where he bestows himself?

*Lord.*

The son of Duncan,  
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,  
Lives in the English court, and is received  
Of the most pious Edward with such grace  
That the malevolence of fortune nothing  
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff  
Is gone to pray the holy king upon his aid 30  
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward;  
That by the help of these, with Him above  
To ratify the work, we may again  
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,  
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,  
Do faithful homage and receive free honors;  
All which we pine for now: and this report  
Hath so exasperate the king that he  
Prepares for some attempt of war.

- Len.* Sent he to Macduff?
- Lord.* He did; and with an absolute "Sir, not I," 40  
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,  
And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the time  
That clogs me with this answer."
- Len.* And that well might  
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance  
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel  
Fly to the court of England and unfold  
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
May soon return to this our suffering country  
Under a hand accursed!
- Lord.* I'll send my prayers with him.  
[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT IV

### SCENE I

*A cavern; in the middle a boiling cauldron*

*Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES*

*First Witch.* Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

*Sec. Witch.* Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.

*Third Witch.* Harpier cries; 't is time, 't is time.

*First Witch.* Round about the cauldron go;

In the poisoned entrails throw.

Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Swelter'd venom sleeping got,

Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;

10

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

*Sec. Witch.* Fillet of a fenny snake,

In the cauldron boil and bake;

Eye of newt and toe of frog,

Wool of bat and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,

Lizard's leg and howlet's wing,

For a charm of powerful trouble,

Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;

20

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

*Third Witch.* Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,  
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,  
Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,  
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
Finger of birth-strangled babe  
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,  
Make the gruel thick and slab.  
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,  
For the ingredients of our cauldron.

30

*All.* Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

*Sec. Witch.* Cool it with a baboon's blood,  
Then the charm is firm and good.

*Enter HECATE to the other three WITCHES*

*Hec.* O, well done! I commend your pains;  
And every one shall share i' the gains.  
And now about the cauldron sing,  
Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
Enchanting all that you put in.

40

*[Music and a song: "Black spirits," etc.]*

*[Hecate retires.]*

*Sec. Witch.* By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes.  
Open, locks,  
Whoever knocks!

*Enter MACBETH*

*Macb.* How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!  
What is 't you do?

*All.* A deed without a name.

*Macb.* I conjure you, by that which you profess, 50  
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me!  
Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
Against the churches; though the yesty waves  
Confound and swallow navigation up;  
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;  
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;  
Though palaces and pyramids do slope  
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure  
Of nature's germins tumble all together,  
Even till destruction sicken; answer me 60  
To what I ask you.

*First Witch.* Speak.

*Sec. Witch.* Demand.

*Third Witch.* We'll answer.

*First Witch.* Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our  
mouths,  
Or from our masters'?

*Macb.* Call 'em, let me see 'em.

*First Witch.* Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten  
From the murderer's gibbet throw  
Into the flame.

*All.* Come, high or low;  
Thyself and office deftly show!

*Thunder. First Apparition, an armed Head*

*Macb.* Tell me, thou unknown power,—

*First Witch.* He knows thy thought.

Hear his speech, but say thou nought. 70

*First App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware  
Macduff;

Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

[*Descends.*]

*Macb.* Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks;  
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright. But one word  
more,—

*First Witch.* He will not be commanded. Here's another,  
More potent than the first.

*Thunder. Second Apparition, a bloody Child*

*Sec. App.* Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

*Macb.* Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

*Sec. App.* Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn  
The power of man; for none of woman born 80  
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends.*]

*Macb.* Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,  
And take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live;  
That I may tell pale-hearted fears it lies,  
And sleep in spite of thunder.

*Thunder. Third Apparition, a Child crowned, with a tree  
in his hand*

What is this,

That rises like the issue of a king,  
And wears upon his baby brow the round  
And top of sovereignty?

*All.* Listen, but speak not to 't.

*Third App.* Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care 90  
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are.  
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until  
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill  
Shall come against him. [Descends.

*Macb.* That will never be.  
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree  
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!  
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood  
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth  
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath  
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart 100  
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art  
Can tell so much, shall Banquo's issue ever  
Reign in this kingdom?

*All.* Seek to know no more.

*Macb.* I will be satisfied. Deny me this,  
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.  
Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?  
[Hautboys.

*First Witch.* Show!

*Sec. Witch.* Show!

*Third Witch.* Show!

*All.* Show his eyes, and grieve his heart; 110  
Come like shadows, so depart!

*A show of eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand;  
BANQUO'S Ghost following*

*Macb.* Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!  
Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. And thy hair,  
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.

A third is like the former. Filthy hags!  
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!  
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?  
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more.  
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass  
Which shows me many more; and some I see 120  
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.  
Horrible sight! Now, I see 't is true;  
For the blood-boltered Banquo smiles upon me,  
And points at them for his. What, is this so?

*First Witch.* Ay, sir, all this is so; but why  
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?  
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,  
And show the best of our delights.  
I'll charm the air to give a sound,  
While you perform your antic round; 130  
That this great king may kindly say,  
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance and then vanish.*]

*Macb.* Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour  
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!  
Come in, without there!

*Enter LENNOX*

*Len.* What 's your grace's will?

*Macb.* Saw you the weird sisters?

*Len.* No, my lord.

*Macb.* Came they not by you?

*Len.* No indeed, my lord.

*Macb.* Infected be the air whereon they ride,  
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear

The galloping of horse; who was 't came by? 140

*Len.* 'T is two or three, my lord, that bring you word  
Macduff is fled to England.

*Macb.* Fled to England!

*Len.* Ay, my good lord.

*Macb.* [*Aside*] Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits:  
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook  
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment  
The very firstlings of my heart shall be  
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,  
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and  
done.

The castle of Macduff I will surprise; 150  
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword  
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls  
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;  
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.  
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?  
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE II

*Fife. Macduff's castle*

*Enter* LADY MACDUFF, *her Son, and* ROSS

*L. Macd.* What had he done, to make him fly the land?

*Ross.* You must have patience, madam.

*L. Macd.* He had none;

His flight was madness. When our actions do not,  
Our fears do make us traitors.

*Ross.* You know not

Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

*L. Macd.* Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,  
His mansion and his titles, in a place  
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,  
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,  
The most diminutive of birds, will fight, 10  
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.  
All is the fear and nothing is the love;  
As little is the wisdom, where the flight  
So runs against all reason.

*Ross.* My dearest coz,  
I pray you, school yourself; but, for your husband,  
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows  
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much  
further;  
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors  
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor  
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear, 20  
But float upon a wild and violent sea  
Each way and move. I take my leave of you;  
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.  
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward  
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,  
Blessing upon you!

*L. Macd.* Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

*Ross.* I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,  
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.  
I take my leave at once. [Exit.]

*L. Macd.* Sirrah, your father's dead; 30  
And what will you do now? How will you live?

*Son.* As birds do, mother.

*L. Macd.* What, with worms and flies?

*Son.* With what I get, I mean, and so do they.

*L. Macd.* Poor bird! thou 'ldst never fear the net nor lime,  
The pitfall nor the gin.

*Son.* Why should I, mother? Poor birds, they are not  
set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

*L. Macd.* Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a  
father?

*Son.* Nay, how will you do for a husband?

*L. Macd.* Why, I can buy me twenty at any market. 40

*Son.* Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

*L. Macd.* Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet i' faith,  
With wit enough for thee.

*Son.* Was my father a traitor, mother?

*L. Macd.* Ay, that he was.

*Son.* What is a traitor?

*L. Macd.* Why, one that swears and lies.

*Son.* And be all traitors that do so?

*L. Macd.* Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be  
hanged.

*Son.* And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

*L. Macd.* Every one.

*Son.* Who must hang them?

*L. Macd.* Why, the honest men.

*Son.* Then the liars and swearers are fools; for there are  
liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men  
and hang up them.

*L. Macd.* Now, God help thee, poor monkey!

But how wilt thou do for a father? 60

*Son.* If he were dead, you 'ld weep for him; if you would

not, it were a good sign that I should quickly  
have a new father.

*L. Macd.* Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

*Enter a MESSENGER*

*Mess.* Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,  
Though in your state of honor I am perfect.  
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly.  
If you will take a homely man's advice,  
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.  
To fright you thus, methinks I am too savage; 70  
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,  
Which is too high your person. Heaven preserve you!  
I dare abide no longer. *[Exit.]*

*L. Macd.* Whither should I fly?  
I have done no harm. But I remember now  
I am in this earthly world, where to do harm  
Is often laudable, to do good sometime  
Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas,  
Do I put up that womanly defence,  
To say I have done no harm? What are these faces?

*Enter Murderers*

*First Mur.* Where is your husband? 80

*L. Macd.* I hope, in no place so unsanctified  
Where such as thou mayst find him.

*First Mur.* He's a traitor.

*Son.* Thou liest, thou shag-ear'd villain!

*First Mur.* What, you egg!  
*[Stabbing him.]*

Young fry of treachery!

*Son.*

He has killed me, mother:

Run away, I pray you!

[*Dies.*

[*Exit Lady Macduff, crying "Murder!"*

*Exeunt Murderers, following her.*

SCENE III

*England. Before the King's palace*

*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF*

*Mal.* Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there  
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

*Macd.*

Let us rather

Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men  
Bestride our down-fallen birthdom. Each new morn  
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows  
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds  
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out  
Like syllable of dolor.

*Mal.*

What I believe, I'll wail;

What know, believe; and what I can redress,

As I shall find the time to friend, I will.

10

What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.

This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,

Was once thought honest; you have loved him well.

He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but some-  
thing

You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom

To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb

To appease an angry god.

*Macd.* I am not treacherous.

*Mal.* But Macbeth is.  
A good and virtuous nature may recoil  
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;  
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose.  
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.  
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,  
Yet grace must still look so.

*Macd.* I have lost my hopes.  
*Mal.* Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.  
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,  
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,  
Without leave-taking? I pray you,  
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,  
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,  
Whatever I shall think.

*Macd.* Bleed, bleed, poor country!  
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,  
For goodness dare not check thee; wear thou thy  
wrongs;  
The title is affeer'd. Fare thee well, lord;  
I would not be the villain that thou think'st  
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp  
And the rich East to boot.

*Mal.* Be not offended;  
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.  
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;  
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash  
Is added to her wounds. I think withal  
There would be hands uplifted in my right;  
And here from gracious England have I offer

Of goodly thousands. But for all this,  
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,  
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country  
Shall have more vices than it had before,  
More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,  
By him that shall succeed.

*Macd.* What should he be?

*Mal.* It is myself I mean; in whom I know 50  
All the particulars of vice so grafted  
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth  
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
With my confineless harms.

*Macd.* Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd  
In evils to top Macbeth.

*Mal.* I grant him bloody,  
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin  
That has a name; but there's no bottom, none, 60  
In my voluptuousness. Your wives, your daughters,  
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up  
The cistern of my lust, and my desire  
All continent impediments would o'erbear,  
That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth  
Than such an one to reign.

*Macd.* Boundless intemperance

In nature is a tyranny; it hath been  
The untimely emptying of the happy throne  
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet  
To take upon you what is yours. You may 70

Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,  
And yet seem cold; the time you may hoodwink.  
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be  
That vulture in you, to devour so many  
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,  
Finding it so inclined.

*Mal.*

With this there grows

In my most ill-composed affection such  
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,  
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
Desire his jewels and this other's house;  
And my more-having would be as a sauce  
To make me hunger more, that I should forge  
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,  
Destroying them for wealth.

80

*Macd.*

This avarice

Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root  
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been  
The sword of our slain kings. Yet do not fear;  
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will  
Of your mere own. All these are portable,  
With other graces weigh'd.

90

*Mal.* But I have none. The king-becoming graces,

As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
I have no relish of them, but abound  
In the division of each several crime,  
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should  
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
Uproar the universal peace, confound

All unity on earth.

*Macd.* O Scotland, Scotland! 100

*Mal.* If such a one be fit to govern, speak.

I am as I have spoken.

*Macd.* Fit to govern!

No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,  
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,  
Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
By his own interdiction stands accursed,  
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father  
Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee,  
 Oftener upon her knees than on her feet, 110  
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!  
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,  
Thy hope ends here!

*Mal.* Macduff, this noble passion,  
Child of integrity, hath from my soul  
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth  
By many of these trains hath sought to win me  
Into his power; and modest wisdom plucks me  
From over-credulous haste. But God above 120  
Deal between thee and me! for even now  
I put myself to thy direction, and  
Unspeak mine own detraction; here abjure  
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,  
For strangers to my nature. I am yet  
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,  
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,

At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
 The devil to his fellow, and delight  
 No less in truth than life; my first false speaking 130  
 Was this upon myself. What I am truly,  
 Is thine and my poor country's to command;  
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,  
 Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,  
 Already at a point, was setting forth.

Now we 'll together, and the chance of goodness  
 Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

*Macd.* Such welcome and unwelcome things at once  
 'T is hard to reconcile.

✕  
*Enter a DOCTOR*

*Mal.* Well, more anon. Comes the king forth, I pray  
 you? 140

*Doct.* Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls  
 That stay his cure: their malady convinces  
 The great assay of art; but at his touch,  
 Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,  
 They presently amend.

*Mal.* I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

*Macd.* What's the disease he means?

*Mal.* 'Tis call'd the evil:

A most miraculous work in this good king,  
 Which often, since my here-remain in England,  
 I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,  
 Himself best knows; but strangely-visited people, 150  
 All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,  
 The mere despair of surgery, he cures,  
 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,

Put on with holy prayers; and 't is spoken,  
To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue  
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
And sundry blessings hang about his throne  
That speak him full of grace.

*Enter Ross*

*Macd.* See, who comes here?

*Mal.* My countryman; but yet I know him not. 160

*Macd.* My ever gentle cousin, welcome hither.

*Mal.* I know him now. Good God, betimes remove  
The means that makes us strangers!

*Ross.* Sir, amen.

*Macd.* Stands Scotland where it did?

*Ross.* Alas, poor country!

Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot  
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where nothing,  
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;  
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air  
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems  
A modern ecstasy. The dead man's knell 170  
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives  
Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
Dying or ere they sicken.

*Macd.* O, relation

Too nice, and yet too true!

*Mal.* What's the newest grief?

*Ross.* That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;

Each minute teems a new one.

*Macd.* How does my wife?

*Ross.* Why, well.

*Macd.* And all my children?

*Ross.* Well, too.

*Macd.* The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

*Ross.* No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

*Macd.* Be not a niggard of your speech; how goes 't? 180

*Ross.* When I came hither to transport the tidings  
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor  
Of many worthy fellows that were out;  
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,  
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot.  
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland  
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,  
To doff their dire distresses.

*Mal.* Be 't their comfort  
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath  
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men; 190  
An older and a better soldier none  
That Christendom gives out.

*Ross.* Would I could answer  
This comfort with the like! But I have words  
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,  
Where hearing should not latch them.

*Macd.* What concern they?  
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief  
Due to some single breast?

*Ross.* No mind that's honest  
But in it shares some woe, though the main part  
Pertains to you alone.

*Macd.* If it be mine,  
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it. 200

*Ross.* Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,  
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound  
That ever yet they heard.

*Macd.* Hum! I guess at it.

*Ross.* Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughter'd. To relate the manner,  
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,  
To add the death of you.

*Mal.* Merciful heaven!

What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;  
Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break. 210

*Macd.* My children too?

*Ross.* Wife, children, servants, all  
That could be found.

*Macd.* And I must be from thence!  
My wife killed too?

*Ross.* I have said.

*Mal.* Be comforted.  
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,  
To cure this deadly grief.

*Macd.* He has no children.—All my pretty ones?  
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?  
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam  
At one fell swoop?

*Mal.* Dispute it like a man.

*Macd.* I shall do so; 220

But I must also feel it as a man.  
I cannot but remember such things were,  
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,  
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,

They were all struck for thee! naught that I am;  
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,  
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

*Mal.* Be this the whetstone of your sword; let grief  
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it. 229

*Macd.* O, I could play the woman with mine eyes,  
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,  
Cut short all intermission. Front to front  
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;  
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,  
Heaven forgive him too!

*Mal.* This tune goes manly.  
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;  
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth  
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above  
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you  
may;  
The night is long that never finds the day. 240

[*Exeunt.*]

## ACT V

### SCENE I

*Dunsinane. Ante-room in the castle*

*Enter a DOCTOR OF PHYSIC and a WAITING-GENTLEWOMAN*

*Doct.* I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

*Gent.* Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

*Doct.* A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what at any time, have you heard her say?

*Gent.* That, sir, which I will not report after her.

*Doct.* You may to me: and 't is most meet you should.

*Gent.* Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech. 20

*Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise;

and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her;  
stand close.

*Doct.* How came she by that light?

*Gent.* Why, it stood by her. She has light by her  
continually; 't is her command.

*Doct.* You see, her eyes are open.

*Gent.* Ay, but their sense is shut.

*Doct.* What is it she does now? Look, how she 30  
rubs her hands.

*Gent.* It is an accustomed action with her, to seem  
thus washing her hands. I have known her  
continue in this a quarter of an hour.

*Lady M.* Yet here's a spot.

*Doct.* Hark! she speaks. I will set down what comes  
from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more  
strongly.

*Lady M.* Out, damned spot! out, I say! One: two:  
why, then 't is time to do 't.—Hell is murky— 40  
Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What  
need we fear who knows it, when none can call  
our power to account?—Yet who would have  
thought the old man to have had so much blood  
in him?

*Doct.* Do you mark that?

*Lady M.* The thane of Fife had a wife; where is  
she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be  
clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o'  
that; you mar all with this starting. 50

*Doct.* Go to, go to; you have known what you should  
not.

*Gent.* She has spoke what she should not, I am

sure of that; heaven knows what she has known.

*Lady M.* Here's the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

*Doct.* What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged. 60

*Gent.* I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

*Doct.* Well, well, well,—

*Gent.* Pray God it be, sir.

*Doct.* This disease is beyond my practice; yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

*Lady M.* Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on 's grave. 70

*Doct.* Even so?

*Lady M.* To bed, to bed; there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed. [Exit.

*Doct.* Will she go now to bed?

*Gent.* Directly.

*Doct.* Foul whisperings are abroad; unnatural deeds  
Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds 80  
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.  
More needs she the divine than the physician.  
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;  
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,  
And still keep eyes upon her. So good night.

*Ang.* Now does he feel  
His secret murders sticking on his hands;  
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach;

Those he commands move only in command,  
Nothing in love. Now does he feel his title      20  
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe  
Upon a dwarfish thief.

*Ment.*                                      Who then shall blame  
His pester'd senses to recoil and start,  
When all that is within him does condemn  
Itself for being there?

*Caith.*                                      Well, march we on,  
To give obeidince where 't is truly owed;  
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,  
And with him pour we, in our country's purge,  
Each drop of us.

*Len.*                                      Or so much as it needs  
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.  
Make we our march towards Birnam.      31

[*Exeunt marching.*]

### SCENE III

*Dunsinane. A room in the castle*

*Enter MACBETH, DOCTOR, and Attendants*

*Macb.* Bring me no more reports; let them fly all;  
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane  
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?  
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know  
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus;  
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman  
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false  
   thanes,  
And mingle with the English epicures!

The mind I sway by and the heart I bear  
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear. 10

*Enter a SERVANT*

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!  
Where got'st thou that goose look?

*Serv.* There is ten thousand—

*Macb.* Geese, villain?

*Serv.* Soldiers, sir.

*Macb.* Go prick thy face and over-red thy fear,  
Thou lily-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?  
Death of my soul! those linen cheeks of thine  
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

*Serv.* The English force, so please you.

*Macb.* Take thy face hence. *[Exit Servant.]*

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,  
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push 20  
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.  
I have lived long enough. My way of life  
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;  
And that which should accompany old age,  
As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,  
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,  
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath,  
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.  
Seyton!

*Enter SEYTON*

*Sey.* What is your gracious pleasure?

*Macb.* What news more? 30

*Sey.* All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

*Macb.* I'll fight, till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.  
Give me my armor.

*Sey.* 'T is not needed yet.

*Macb.* I'll put it on.

Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;  
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.  
How does your patient, doctor?

*Doct.* Not so sick, my lord,  
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,  
That keep her from her rest.

*Macb.* Cure her of that.  
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased, 40  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart?

*Doct.* Therein the patient  
Must minister to himself.

*Macb.* Throw physic to the dogs, I'll none of it.  
Come, put mine armor on; give me my staff.  
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me.  
Come, sir, dispatch. If thou couldst, doctor, cast 50  
The water of my land, find her disease  
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,  
I would applaud thee to the very echo,  
That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.—  
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,  
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of  
them?

*Doct.* Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation

Makes us hear something.

*Macb.* Bring it after me.

I will not be afraid of death and bane,  
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane. 60

*Doct. [Aside]* Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,  
Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*]

#### SCENE IV

##### *Country near Birnam wood*

*Drum and colors. Enter MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD and his Son, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers, marching*

*Mal.* Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand  
That chambers will be safe.

*Ment.* We doubt it nothing.

*Siw.* What wood is this before us?

*Ment.* The wood of Birnam.

*Mal.* Let every soldier hew him down a bough,  
And bear 't before him; thereby shall we shadow  
The numbers of our host, and make discovery  
Err in report of us.

*Sol.* It shall be done.

*Siw.* We learn no other but the confident tyrant  
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure  
Our setting down before 't.

*Mal.* 'Tis his main hope; 10

For where there is advantage to be given,  
Both more and less have given him the revolt,  
And none serve with him but constrained things

Whose hearts are absent too.

*Macd.* Let our just censures  
Attend the true event, and put we on  
Industrious soldiership.

*Siw.* The time approaches  
That will with due decision make us know  
What we shall say we have and what we owe.  
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,  
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate; 20  
Towards which advance the war.

*[Exeunt, marching.]*

#### SCENE V

*Dunsinane. Within the castle*

*Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colors*

*Macb.* Hang out our banners on the outward walls;  
The cry is still, "They come!" Our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn; here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up.  
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,  
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
And beat them backward home.

*[A cry of women within.]*

What is that noise?

*Sey.* It is the cry of women, my good lord. *[Exit.]*

*Macb.* I have almost forgot the taste of fears.  
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd 10  
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair

Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
As life were in 't. I have supp'd full with horrors;  
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,  
Cannot once start me.

*Re-enter SEYTON*

Wherefore was that cry?

*Sey.* The queen, my lord, is dead.

*Macb.* She should have died hereafter;

There would have been a time for such a word.  
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, 20  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

*Enter a MESSENGER*

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

*Mess.* Gracious my lord, 30  
I should report that which I say I saw,  
But know not how to do it.

*Macb.* Well, say, sir.

*Mess.* As I did stand my watch upon the hill,  
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,  
The wood began to move.

*Macb.* Liar and slave!

*Mess.* Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so.  
Within this three mile may you see it coming;  
I say, a moving grove.

*Macb.* If thou speak'st false,  
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,  
Till famine cling thee; if thy speech be sooth, 40  
I care not if thou dost for me as much.  
I pull in resolution, and begin  
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend  
That lies like truth. "Fear not, till Birnam wood  
Do come to Dunsinane;" and now a wood  
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!  
If this which he avouches does appear,  
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.  
I gin to be a-weary of the sun,  
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone. 50  
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!  
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE VI

*Dunsinane. Before the castle*

*Drum and colors. Enter MALCOLM, OLD SIWARD, MAC-  
DUFF, and their Army, with boughs*

*Mal.* Now near enough; your leavy screens throw down,  
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,  
Shall, with my cousin, your right noble son,  
Lead our first battle. Worthy Macduff and we  
Shall take upon 's what else remains to do,

According to our order.

*Siw.* Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,  
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

*Macd.* Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,  
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. 10  
[*Exeunt.*]

### SCENE VII

*The same*

*Enter MACBETH*

*Macb.* They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,  
But bear-like I must fight the course. What's he  
That was not born of woman? Such a one  
Am I to fear, or none.

*Enter young SIWARD*

*Yo. Siw.* What is thy name?

*Macb.* Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.

*Yo. Siw.* No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name  
Than any is in hell.

*Macb.* My name 's Macbeth.

*Yo. Siw.* The devil himself could not pronounce a title  
More hateful to mine ear.

*Macb.* No, nor more fearful.

*Yo. Siw.* Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword 10  
I 'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and young SIWARD is slain.*]

*Macb.* Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,  
Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [Exit.

*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF*

*Macd.* That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!  
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,  
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.  
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms  
Are hired to bear their staves; either thou, Macbeth,  
Or else my sword, with an unbatter'd edge,  
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be; 20  
By this great clatter, one of greatest note  
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!  
And more I beg not. [Exit. *Alarums.*

*Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD*

*Siw.* This way, my lord; the castle's gently rendered:  
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;  
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;  
The day almost itself professes yours,  
And little is to do.

*Mal.* We have met with foes  
That strike beside us.

*Siw.* Enter, sir, the castle.  
[Exeunt. *Alarum.*

## SCENE VIII

*Another part of the field**Enter MACBETH*

*Macb.* Why should I play the Roman fool, and die  
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes  
Do better upon them.

*Enter MACDUFF*

*Macd.* Turn, hell-hound, turn!

*Macb.* Of all men else I have avoided thee.  
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged  
With blood of thine already.

*Macd.* I have no words;  
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain  
Than terms can give thee out!

*[They fight.]*

*Macb.* Thou locest labor;  
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air  
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed. 10  
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;  
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield  
The one of woman born.

*Macd.* Despair thy charm;  
And let the angel whom thou still hast served  
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripp'd.

*Macb.* Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,  
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!

And be these juggling fiends no more believed,  
That palter with us in a double sense; 20  
That keep the word of promise to our ear,  
And break it to our hope. I 'll not fight with thee.

*Macd.* Then yield thee, coward,  
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time.  
We 'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,  
"Here may you see the tyrant."

*Macb.* I will not yield,  
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,  
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.  
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane, 30  
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,  
Yet I will try the last. Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff;  
And damn'd be him that first cries "Hold, enough!"  
[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*]

*Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colors, MALCOLM,  
old SIWARD, ROSS, the other Thanes, and Soldiers*

*Mal.* I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

*Siw.* Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,  
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

*Mal.* Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

*Ross.* Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt.  
He only lived but till he was a man; 40  
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he died.

*Siw.* Then he is dead?

*Ross.* Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow  
Must not be measured by his worth, for then  
It hath no end.

*Siw.* Had he his hurts before?

*Ross.* Ay, on the front.

*Siw.* Why, then, God's soldier be he!

Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death.  
And so his knell is knolled.

*Mal.* He's worth more sorrow, 50  
And that I'll spend for him.

*Siw.* He's worth no more.  
They say he parted well and paid his score;  
And so God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

*Re-enter MACDUFF with MACBETH'S head*

*Macd.* Hail, king! for so thou art. Behold where stands  
The usurper's cursed head. The time is free:  
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,  
That speak my salutation in their minds;  
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:  
Hail, King of Scotland!

*All.* Hail, King of Scotland!

[*Flourish.*]

*Mal.* We shall not spend a large expense of time 60  
Before we reckon with your several loves,  
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,  
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland  
In such an honor named. What's more to do,  
Which would be planted newly with the time,  
As calling home our exiled friends abroad

That fled the snares of watchful tyranny,  
Producing forth the cruel ministers  
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,  
Who, as 't is thought, by self and violent hands 70  
Took off her life; this, and what needful else  
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace  
We will perform in measure, time and place.  
So thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*]



## NOTES

### ACT I. SCENE I

**Thunder and lightning** attend every meeting of the witches, and symbolize their evil and destructive spirit.

3. **hurly-burly**: commotion, hullabaloo; the rebellion against Duncan's government. The original word was *hurling*; (*curling* was added for effect, and then the whole shortened. Compare *holus-bolus* and *hocus-pocus*).

4. **lost and won**: lost by the rebels, won by Macbeth. The *paradox* is typical of the weird talk of the witches. Compare line 10, below.

8. **There to meet with Macbeth**, the one person in whom the witches have a special interest. The name Macbeth was sometimes spelled MacBeeth; and in Shakespeare's time the last syllable would have been pronounced *bayth*, to rhyme with heath (*hayth*). *Meet* is to be read as two syllables, or prolonged, for the sake of the metre.

9. **Graymalkin**: a pet name for a cat (gray Mary, Molly). Every witch had some animal, usually a peculiar one, as her *familiar*, or spirit-comrade. **Paddock**: toad, one of the animals associated with witches, in the common superstitions of the times. **anon**; immediately. Servants used to cry "Anon!" where now they use "Coming!"

10. **Fair is foul, and foul is fair**: the keynote of the play. To the witches any good thing was bad, because their success lay in doing harm. (Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil!—*Isaiah*, V, 20.)

### SCENE II

9. **Worthy to be**: entitled to be called; **to that**: to that end, with that result.

11. **multiplying**: manifold, innumerable.

13. **kerns and gallowglasses:** Irish soldiers, light-armed and heavy-armed. **damned:** accursed.

15. **Showed like, etc.:** appeared to be the very mistress of the rebel.

17. **Disdaining fortune:** despising luck, and putting his faith in his sword (brandished steel); thus in sharp contrast to Macdonwald, who trusted all to "Fortune."

18. **smoked:** steamed (as we say a dinner is served *smoking-hot*).

21. **Which:** who, as often in the Elizabethan period.

Shakespeare was not content with any mere phrase expressing haste, like "without an instant's hesitation." He *makes a picture* of the formalities which the combatants omitted. There was no handshaking; no time was given for farewells. Throughout the play this practice is followed,—of *visualising* what a less active eye would see vaguely or not at all.

22. **from the nave to the chaps:** from the navel to the chops, or chin—an awful blow, given with the broadsword as the two hands swung it up at the close of the customary great circle. The broadsword was not a thrusting or parrying weapon, like a rapier, but ponderous,—crushing or splitting the body of the foe, when not intercepted by another equally massive weapon, or by a shield.

24. **cousin:** in this instance literally true, for Duncan and Macbeth were sons of sisters who were daughters of King Malcolm. Frequently the word cousin was used among noblemen to suggest mere friendliness.

25. **As whence the sun 'gins his reflection, etc.:** As from the east rise not only the sun but also storms, so from the same battle rose not only hope but fear. **Reflection:** used in the rare sense of *shining*.

31. **But: than. the Norweyan lord:** the king of Norway, who with Macdonwald, assailed the power of Duncan. **surveying vantage:** seeing a good chance.

32. **furbished:** burnished.

34. **Yes:** ironical, as the next line shows.

36. **sooth:** truth.

37. **double cracks:** double charges (*metonymy*, the effect for the cause).

39. **Doubly redoubled:** an example of *emphasis* derived from the repetition of the explosive consonants, *d* and *b*. To produce such an effect in this way is almost instinctive, as may be seen from the words used in our daily speech for such a purpose. One of the most remarkable examples in modern poetry is the familiar close of Kipling's *Fuzzy Wuzzy*,

You big, black, bounding beggar,—  
For you broke a British square!

40. **bathe:** the point of the line calls for the stressing of this word in reading.

41. **memorize another Golgotha:** make another place as memorable as the spot on which Jesus' blood was shed—"a place named of dead mens skulles, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha"—*Mark*, XV, in the "*Breeches*" Bible, 1599.

48. **seems:** appears ready (going back to the root meaning of the word). This is the first remark of Lennox, and is, like everything else he says, discerning. He is, perhaps, the shrewdest observer in the play. **God save the King:** the regular greeting.

50. **flout the sky:** wave proudly, and, being hostile flags, insult the free air of Scotland.

51. **fan our people cold:** strike terror into their hearts.

54. **dismal:** ill-boding (*dies mala*).

55. **Bellona's bridegroom:** Macbeth, who is described as wedded to Bellona, the Roman Goddess of War; **lapped in proof:** clad in armor of steel proved good.

56. **Confronted him with self-comparisons:** challenged him to measure his skill.

57. **point rebellious:** the rebel's sword.

58. **Curbing his lavish spirit:** subduing his over-confidence.

61. **composition:** compromise, terms of peace.

62. **Nor:** but—not.

63. **Inch:** Island. Inchcolm, in the Firth of Forth, was named for St. Columba, an Irish missionary who built a monastery there in the sixth century.

64. **dollars:** thalers (an *anachronism*). This term was ap-

parently first used five hundred years after the time of Macbeth, and even then not in Scotland, but in Bohemia. Shakespeare was not consistent in his references to chronology, or to geography.

65. *deceive*: betray.

66. *bosom interest*: my most intimate personal advantage (compare *bosom-friend*).

67. And with his former title greet Macbeth prepares the audience for the prophecy of the witches in the following scene, and raises Macbeth to a noble eminence as a military personage. This looks fair on the surface. What if, by some turn of fate, this fair fortune should prove foul

### • SCENE III

6. *Aroint thee*: begone, (probably an old North Country term meaning, stand 'round, used to cows in their stalls). *rump-fed ronyon*: mangy woman, fed on scraps—a term of insult offered by the witch to the sailor's wife who would not share her chestnuts. (*rump-fed* may mean fed on the refuse of nuts. This was a recognized commercial use of the word *rump* in 1605. The scornful reference would then be equivalent to, "Keep your old chestnuts—they're not fit to eat, anyway!")

7. *Aleppo*: a Turkish trading city, in the Syrian sands, a hundred miles from the coast, and therefore to be reached only by the "ships of the desert." *Tiger*: a favorite name for ships ever since the time of Virgil; especially appropriate for a pirate-ship. *in a sieve*: the leakiest possible craft. Shakespeare was creating the witches out of very ordinary everyday superstitions. England, even London, was fast in the grip of popular belief in witches and in their power to work petty evils and do strange things, such as riding through the sky on broomsticks, or sailing on or under the sea in sieves. We shall see later that there was another and far different kind of power and devilry in the "weird women," or "weird sisters," of this play.

9. *like a rat without a tail*: It was supposed that witches could change themselves instantly into whatever animals they wished, but always without the tail.

10. *I'll do*: I'll gnaw—perhaps the planks of the *Tiger*, per-

haps her rudder. At any rate, the ship is to be disabled and delayed.

17. **shipman's card:** compass.

19. **Sleep:** Observe, for future reference, that the witches claim the power to keep the captain from sleeping.

20. **pent-house lid: eyelid.** The *metaphor* is drawn from the little roof built out over a window or door to protect it from the sun and rain.

21. **forbid:** outlawed. Ancient law forbade anyone to furnish such a person with fire, water, or food.

22. **se'nnights:** seven-nights (compare *fortnights*). Eighty-one weeks would be a year and seven months.

23. **peak:** lose flesh, so that the bones show their sharp ends. In some parts of this country it is not uncommon to hear a thin and sickly person described as "looking peaked."

33. **posters:** couriers.

34. **Thus do go about, about:** Full of sharp angular *rhythms* is all this talk of the witches, and their stiff and bony limbs keep time with the motion of the verse. The *rhyme* is needed to give point and emphasis to the phrases, and to suggest the charms and incantations which were the chief stock-in-trade of a witch.

38. **So foul and fair a day I have not seen:** The contrast is true in a deeper sense than Macbeth intends to express. What he refers to is probably the storm following upon the victory. But it is equally true that in his brilliant personal triumph lie concealed the germs of great peril to his own character. What the peril was will appear before this scene ends.

These are the first words spoken by Macbeth, and it is not mere accident that they echo the *motif*, or theme, of the *Weird Women*, so ominously uttered in Scene I.

42. **ought that man may question** seems to show Banquo's belief in "spirits." Yet there is a tone of challenge, almost of familiarity, in this address to the witches.

51. **Why do you start:** Macbeth starts because the prophecy coincides so astonishingly with his own cherished ambition.

52. **fair:** did this fair already seem foul to Macbeth?

53. **fantastical:** creatures of our fancy, unreal.

55. **grace:** favor (*gratia*), the Thaneship of Glamis.
56. **noble having:** the possession of the noble name, Cawdor.  
**royal hope:** hope of the crown of Scotland.
57. **rapt:** absent-minded: (*raptus*, snatched away, from the here and now to the distant and future).
58. **seeds of time:** that in the present which will grow to something great in the future.
60. **who neither beg nor fear your favors nor your hate:** who neither beg your favors nor fear your hate. This *parallel* structure is common in Shakespeare. Banquo is almost chaffing the weird sisters, while his partner is plunged in profound reflection.
65. **Lesser than Macbeth, and greater:** another example of *paradox*, the witches' favorite figure.
67. **get:** beget.
71. **By Sinel's death:** by the death of my father.
73. **prosperous:** in good fortune. It is hard to consider this frank on Macbeth's part, but evidently he was entirely unaware that Cawdor had shared in the rebellion. We must suppose that he was so busily concerned in his own personal combats as not to know the situation in other parts of the field.
75. **owe;** own, or have.
75. **whither are they vanished:** curiosity, almost boyish, on the part of Banquo. Contrast with Macbeth's reply, which expresses intense seriousness, even awe.
78. **Witches vanish:** "Mr. Irving's whole attitude as the bewildering prophecy strikes upon his ear and as the strange prophets vanish into air, is that of a man who has actually held converse with the spirits of another world."
84. **eaten on the insane root:** eaten of the root that makes insane (an example of *prolepsis*, or anticipation). What this root was is not known—probably hemlock, or henbane.
92. **His wonders and his praises, etc.:** Without attempting an exact paraphrase of this puzzling passage, let us say that it conveys a strong impression of Duncan's awe and gratitude towards the prowess of Macbeth. It almost seems to express a doubt whether so great a general ought not to be king.
97. **Strange images of death:** the slain.

**104. earnest of a greater honour:** pledge of something higher than the Thaneship of Cawdor. Could this help meaning to Macbeth the crown?

**107. the devil:** through his recognized emissaries, the witches.

**112. line the rebel:** reinforce Macdonwald.

**115. treasons capital:** disloyal acts worthy of death.

**120. trusted home:** carried to its logical conclusion. Banquo wishes to persuade Macbeth that both prophecies are so absurd as to merit no serious respect.

**123. to win us to our harm:** to tempt us on to misfortune; to get us into trouble.

**124. The instruments of darkness tell us truths, etc.:** The agents of the devil begin with honesty but end with utter betrayal. This is the way of all forms of temptation to sin.

**126. In deepest consequence:** in the important situations that follow: *or*, most fatally in the future.

It was here that Macbeth was given the chance of his life. But instead of listening to Banquo's simple and friendly warning, he passed into that rapt state in which temptation became all-powerful.

**128. prologues to the swelling act, etc.:** The first act, Glamis; second, Cawdor; third, King. The *third* is always the *swelling* act, in which things reach a *climax*. The use of the language of the stage was a favorite figure with Shakespeare.

**130. supernatural soliciting;** temptation by the creatures of the world of darkness. This is the first of three distinct external impulses, or jogs, towards the crime of murdering Duncan for the crown.

**134. suggestion:** of murdering his king.

**135. horrid:** so shocking as to make one's hair rise (*horridus*, bristling). **image:** the vision of his crime. To see with terrible clearness the unreal thing was one of Macbeth's poet-gifts. The rest of this soliloquy shows the same habit of mind, closing with the sweeping acknowledgment that "nothing is but what is not." **unfix my hair:** make my hair stand on end. The feeling as if the hair were loosened explains the word *unfix* (compare V, v, 11-13).

136. **my seated heart:** my heart which is usually so calm under excitement.

137. **Present fears:** present terrors, causes of fear.

140. **single:** weak. There are still surviving in England certain uses of *single* in this sense, and of *double* in the sense of strong. **function:** (three syllables) power of rational thought; common-sense.

141. **surmise:** vague guesswork; brooding.

142. **rapt:** for the second time Banquo has observed Macbeth's deep absorption in the thought of the future.

143. **If chance will have me king, etc.:** This resolution, and the next *aside*, which completes it, mark Macbeth's effort to be self-respecting and to resist the temptation to crime.

147. **Hour:** occasion or opportunity.

149. **Give me your favour:** pardon me.

150. **forgotten:** This apology, which sounds so vague to the other thanes, probably refers to a very definite memory—his old ambition to be king, which was disappointed when Duncan was elected, and he, the rival candidate, was defeated. **Kind gentlemen, etc.:** the courtesy of this speech is remarkable in itself, but the form of it as well is worthy of examination. Such graceful complimentary language was habitual with the courtiers of the time; there are many examples of it in this play.

153. **Think upon what hath chanced, etc.:** Macbeth is addressing Banquo only. He apparently has in his mind some plan for taking Banquo into his confidence as a confederate. Later in the play, just before the murder of the king, he promises to make it profitable for Banquo to accept some proposal which he will make. **What hath chanced:** the strange coincidence between the prophecy of the witches and the award of the king.

154. **The interim having weighed it:** The interval having given us time to consider it (Compare, "Time will tell"). (Another construction makes *interim* adverbial,—Having considered it during the interval.)

## SCENE IV

5. **very frankly he confessed his treasons, etc.:** All this passage is said to have recalled to the audience the manner of the death, at Elizabeth's command, of the great Earl of Essex, friend of the Earl of Southampton, who was Shakespeare's patron.

9. **studied in his death, etc.:** whose one desire was to meet death with proud indifference: **in his death** modifies, not studied, but the infinitive phrase; **been studied:** been desirous (*studeo*).

10. **owed:** owned. That which we *own* by virtue of God's gift we still *owe* for.

11. **Careless:** in the passive sense of uncared for.

12. **To find the mind's construction:** to read the disposition or character. This is a bit of philosophy common in Shakespeare.

19. **proportion both of thanks and payment:** Duncan is overwhelmed with the magnitude of the service Macbeth has rendered his government. **Proportion** means the just allotment or award. He feels that anything less than the crown itself would be disproportionate, hence, "More is thy due than more than all can pay."

28. **I have begun to plant thee:** He has, by making him Thane of Cawdor.

32. **hold thee to my heart:** Is it a mere fancy that Duncan seems to greet Banquo with more personal warmth than he does Macbeth? **There if I grow, etc.:** It is certainly true that, whereas Macbeth's reply to the King's greeting is stately and wordy, Banquo's is brief, informal, and to some minds even playful.

34. **Wanton:** wilful, not to be restrained.

35. **of sorrow:** sorrowful.

37. **establish our estate:** To publish his purpose that Malcolm shall succeed him on the throne is to bring to an immediate issue Macbeth's own plans for the future. This is the second "jog" towards the crime. The third jog appears in the king's proposal to sleep under his roof at Inverness. The disappointed thane makes a calm reply to the King, but, as he leaves the stage, he reveals the effect of the royal proclamation, and of the royal plan.

45. **harbinger:** herald, one who went ahead to secure a *harbor*,

or lodging. **joyful:** with a far deeper meaning than Duncan perceived in the word.

**49. On which I must fall down, etc.:** Either he must yield to the humiliation of seeing young Malcolm king, or he must prevent that by swiftly usurping the throne for himself.

**50. Stars, hide your fires:** He dreads the eye of heaven—evidence that by nature he was not devoid of conscience.

**52. wink at the hand:** close, so as not to see. He dreads even the thought of knowing in his own mind what his hand may do to accomplish his "black and deep desires." **yet let that be:** Here is a crisis. Macbeth meets it, and with perfect definiteness takes the wrong turn, without having consulted his wife. We must remember this fact when we proportion the guilt of the two, later on, in our review of their joint action.

#### SCENE V

**3. more in them than mortal knowledge:** In justice to Macbeth, his unquestioning belief in the supernatural character of the weird sisters must be acknowledged. He really believes they represent a power not of earth (and not, of course, of heaven) which, working on his side, will make him king in spite of the law of Scotland.

**5. made themselves air: evaporated. into which they vanished:** To *vanish into air*, and to *make oneself air* are two expressions for the same thing. Shakespeare frequently resorts to such repetition, especially if his first expression is likely to puzzle the audience. There are more than a score of such explanatory paraphrases in *Macbeth*.

It is not unlikely that this trick of style was unconsciously borrowed by the dramatist from the Psalmist. Hebrew poetry is full of such balanced and clarifying expressions,—for example, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me;" "We are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand."

"Mrs. Siddons read on, in a strong calm voice, until she came to this point. As she was about to pronounce the word *vanished* she paused, drew a short breath, and exclaimed 'vanished!' which

showed that the whole spirit of the temptation had entered into her soul. In the look and tone with which she delivered the word *air*, you recognized ten times the wonder with which Macbeth and Banquo beheld the vanishing of the witches. The 'Hail, King that shalt be' was the winding up of the spell. It was pronounced with the grandeur of one already by anticipation a queen."

16. **shalt be**: Lady Macbeth's response to the call of opportunity is like Macbeth's, "Yet let that be," only hers is unquestioning and prompt. Her mind is not fanciful, but matter-of-fact.

17. **thy nature**: that strange compound of dreaminess with activity.

18. **too full o' the milk, etc.**: too human, not coldly calculating. "You are the victim of your *natural and human weakness*."—*Address of Venizelos* to King Constantine of Greece, August 27, 1916.

19. **the nearest way**: murder (contrast with Macbeth's, "If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me." I, iii, 143).

21. **illness**: feverish impatience, passion; or "unscrupulousness."—Hudson.

24. **Thus must thou do, etc.**: You must kill Duncan, if you really want the crown; and the murder of Duncan you hesitate to do, though you wish it done.

28. **chastise**: accent on the first syllable, as usual in Shakespeare.

29. **golden round**: one of several figurative expressions in the play meaning the royal power. This one is *metonymy*—the symbol for the kingship.

30. **fate and metaphysical aid**: success in battle and the friendly prophecy of the weird women.

34. **informed for preparation**: notified me in order that I might be prepared for such an honor.

36. **had the speed of**: outran. Recall the heralds in Scott's *Lady of the Lake*.

39. **The raven himself is hoarse, etc.**: This messenger is the

hoarse-voiced raven, who should inevitably be the herald to announce Duncan's fatal visit.

40. **entrance**: pronounce *enterance*, for the sake of the metre.

41. **my**: the word of a woman who felt hers to be the chief responsibility for the affair in hand. The rest of the soliloquy bears out this conception of Lady Macbeth's mood.

42. **mortal**: murderous.

46. **compunctious visitings of nature**: qualms of conscience.

47. **fell**: cruel (*foul*). **Keep peace between the effect and it**: keep my purpose from accomplishing its results. The figure is drawn from the anxiety of duelists not to be separated.

50. **sightless substances**: invisible beings.

51. **wait on**: serve. **nature's mischief**: destruction to life. **Come, thick night** suggests Macbeth's "Stars, hide your fires."

52. **pall**: cloak. **dunniest**: most unearthly dark, like the fearful brown which we sometimes see in connection with a thunder-storm.

55. **Great Glamis, worthy Cawdor, etc.**: there is method in this greeting. Lady Macbeth has no uncertain touch when she undertakes to lift her husband's resolution.

60. **And when goes hence**: a suggestive question.

61. **Tomorrow,—as he purposes**: a hypocritical answer.

Macbeth is waiting, as she knew he would, for his wife to make a definite plan and a move towards the fatal deed. She does not disappoint him.

61. **O, never shall sun that morrow see**: "Mrs. Siddons uttered 'O, never' with a falling inflection; and 'never shall sun that morrow see,' with a strong dwelling emphasis, low, very slow sustained voice, the note unvaried."

64. **To beguile the time, etc.**: To deceive the people, look like the season,—festive.

68. **provided for**: murdered (a *euphemism*, like *passed away*, for *dead*).

71. **Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom**: She really believed that, the crown once gained, no matter how, Macbeth's power would be absolute and unquestioned.

72. **We will speak further:** shows how accurate was his wife's analysis of his character.

73. **To alter favor ever is to fear:** to look afraid will make you afraid. This is an important and universal truth of human nature. If we habitually assume an attitude of fear, we gradually become timid; and the reverse is equally true, as witness the timid soldier taught by a brave carriage to be brave. In other words, the body reacts on the spirit, as well as the spirit on the body.

#### SCENE VI

3. **Unto our gentle senses:** gently, or soothingly, unto our senses.

4. **temple-haunting martlet:** the swift, which builds under eaves. Many readers and even dictionaries have confused the martlet with the martin, or swallow. The martlet is *cypselus apus*; the martin, *chelidon urbica*. **approve, prove.**

5. **mansionry:** home-building.

6. **jutty:** projection. **frieze:** the part of a wall immediately under a cornice (the *frieze* of the Parthenon).

7. **Buttress:** that thickening of the wall at a given point, which helps it bear the weight or thrust of the arch above. **coign of vantage:** corner from which the besieged could fight with advantage, and in which the martlet could build with advantage.

8. **pendent bed:** nest built against the wall. **procreant cradle:** in which she hatches her young.

8. **most:** in greatest numbers.

12. **Herein:** by coming here in this unexpected way; *or*, in the principle I have just stated.

13. **How you shall bid God 'ild us, etc.:** to pray God to reward me for your pains, and, yourselves, to thank me for your trouble.

Duncan's doctrine is that his visit is a "means of grace" to the Macbeths and that they ought to be grateful for it on that account, and to ask God to reward him for it. In the fifth chapter of the Epistle of James, we find: "Behold *we count them happy which endured.*" God 'ild us: The common response of a beggar when given alms, was "God 'ild yel" meaning, "May God

yield or reward you!" This expression became so customary as to mean little more than "thank-you;" as the "good-by" of common usage means far less than the original "God be with you." Custom robs any expression of a part of its native force.

**20. We rest your hermits:** Lady Macbeth replies that she and her husband will pray for him, not only now but always (*rest*). There seems no limit to her hypocrisy.

**22. purveyor:** (accent on first syllable) The purveyor (*F. pour voir, L. pro-video*) rode ahead of the king to provide food.

**26. theirs, themselves and what is theirs:** their dependents, themselves, and their property. **in compt:** in account, that is, in trust.

**31. By your leave, hostess:** Duncan graciously draws back to permit Lady Macbeth to precede him through the door; *or*, perhaps, graciously excuses himself for preceding his hostess, even though he was the king.

#### SCENE VII

**Hautboys:** musical instruments of wood (*F. haut bois*),—the *oboe* of the modern orchestra. It is the *treble* corresponding to the *bass* of the bassoon. Both are reed instruments. **Sewer:** a butler. The name was derived from the French *essayer*, and meant one who "tasted of each dish to prove that there was no poison in it." "Another part of the sewer's office was to bring water for the guests to wash their hands with; his chief mark of distinction was a towel round his arm." **service:** Service included the general utilities of the table, such as the cloth, the trenchers (wooden plates), bread, water and salt.

**1. If it were done when 'tis done:** If it were completely and forever accomplished when it is once performed.

**3. trammel up the consequence:** net up the effects; as if to entangle some dangerous pursuing beast, and so enable one to escape in safety.

**4. his surcease:** its arrest or stoppage (an old French legal term, *surseoir*, from the Latin *supersedere*).

**6. But here, upon this bank and shoal of time:** merely here, in this life. *The bank and shoal, time (of time* is an appositive

phrase, as in the city of *New York*, or, the art of *conversation*) is contrasted with *the life to come*, which we often refer to as the *ocean of eternity*.

In nautical language a *bank* is a plateau under the sea. The Banks of Newfoundland, for example, have less than one hundred fathoms of water, while the surrounding depths are two or three thousand fathoms. The word *shoal* means shallow water near the shore.

7. jump: risk.

8. that: in that.

17. faculties: royal powers and dignities.

22. cherubin: Psalm XVIII describes God in the act of taking pity on a man who was wronged: "He bowed the heavens and came downe, and it was darcke under his fete. He rode upon the Cherubins and dyd fle; he came flyenge with the wynges of the wynde." This is quoted from the Coverdale Bible, published in 1535 and therefore accessible to Shakespeare. Such a subject was attractive to the Italian painters, and it would not be surprising if Shakespeare had seen a copy of some such representation. At any rate the terrific image of God's wrath was clear to his vision; and, if we do not seek to analyse the pictorial details too minutely, we can feel the moving power of the lines as a whole, and so sympathize with Macbeth in his dread.

23. sightless couriers: the winds, invisible messengers, on which Rumor was supposed to travel,—hence, "blow the horrid deed in every eye." We have such everyday expressions as "Bad news flies like the wind."

25. That tears shall drown: The French have a saying: "A little rain beats down a big wind." I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, etc.: If Macbeth were about to ride on horseback he would buckle on his spurs and then vault into the saddle. In this figurative passage he "confesses to himself that he has no spur, that is no sufficient motive; and he can't land in the saddle, that is, sit firm on his *intent*."

27. o'erleaps itself: o'erleaps. We have, in colloquial use, this sort of *middle voice*—oversleeps himself, overexercises himself, etc. Such phrases are not praiseworthy, but they are fairly frequent in the language.

Macbeth has enumerated in this soliloquy several good reasons why it is difficult for him to keep "set" on the "intent" to murder Duncan. First, "we still have judgment here;" second, "he's here in double trust;" third, Duncan has been so good a king that popular indignation and pity will be overwhelming.

33. **Golden opinions:** Macbeth is arguing that a *golden reputation* is a big thing to risk, even for the chance of winning a golden crown.

35. **Was the hope drunk, etc.:** Were you then merely indulging in a fanciful hope of the crown, such as arises from too much wine, when you addressed yourself to the deed in hand. **dressed:** addressed (as used in golf).

39. **Such I account thy love:** love as unstable as his hope. This creates a new issue for Macbeth. He must murder his king or lose his wife. He is likely in her various taunts to find the missing "spur." She dares to employ such a method because she is certain of his love.

40. **To be the same in thine own act and valor as thou art in desire:** This is a perfect illustration of Macbeth's divided state of mind. Lady Macbeth knows perfectly well that his "act" and "desire" are powerful enough when united; that his desire is satisfactory but that his will holds back; and that therefore her part is to *goad his will into an action* which shall commit him to the desired criminal policy.

44. **Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would":** letting cowardice accompany ambition. The cat no sooner desired the fish than the thought occurred to her, "I must not wet my feet;" and so she failed to satisfy her appetite.

The adage was discovered by Boswell in Heywood's *Proverbs* (1566), "The cate would eate fishe, and would not wet her feete." But the saying is far older than that; it was common in Latin.

47. **is none:** that is, no man,—therefore a beast. But Lady Macbeth disagrees with her husband and thinks it was when he proposed the murder that he was manly.

51. **Nor time nor place did then adhere:** opportunity did not offer itself. This is the clearest evidence that Macbeth had

proposed doing away with Duncan before ever the witches had hailed him king.

**59. We fail:** Read to express scorn and incredulity. Such an idea is not to be entertained; *or*, read with a period, to mean, "Well, then that's the end of it."

Mrs. Pritchard gave "We fail" the scornful, and Mrs. Siddons the subdued, matter-of-fact intonation.

**60. screw your courage to the sticking-place:** The metaphor is that of a cross-bow, or arbalist, in which by a sort of windlass the string was screwed to the proper notch, or sticking-place, from which the trigger could instantly release it with all its power.

**62. rather:** earlier (comparative of the Anglo-Saxon *raethe*, early).

**64. wassail:** the drinking of healths (Anglo-Saxon, *waes hael*, be of health). **convince:** overcome (*con-vinco*, completely conquer).

**65. memory, the warder of the brain:** Shakespeare draws his figure from the description of the brain given by the old anatomists. They made it a three-fold structure in which the memory was most directly in the path of fumes rising from the stomach.

**66. the receipt of reason:** the main organ of thought. **Receipt:** receptacle. The place where customs were received was called the "receipt of customs."

**67. limbeck:** alembic, or retort. The fumes of liquor will rise from the memory, and begot the reason. The whole image is that of the process of distillation. The deed so coldly planned ranks with the drugging tricks of the coarsest modern criminal.

**71. spongy:** drunken, having absorbed all the liquor they will hold. Compare Portia's remark, in *The Merchant of Venice*, II, ii, 108, "Ere I will be married to a sponge."

**72. quell:** kill.

**73. mettle:** spirit, stuff (originally a misspelling of *metal*; but now a highly respectable word in its own right).

**77. Who dares receive it other:** One of the incredible things about the crime of these conspirators is their implicit faith that

they can outface the suspicions of Duncan's friends. It will be interesting to see how this confidence evaporates in the moment of trial, when the crime has come to light.

78. *As*: Seeing how.

79. *bend up each corporal agent*: prepare my dagger, hand, and mind. The thought in mind echoes Lady Macbeth's figure of the cross-bow.

81. *mock the time, etc.*: The act ends on the keynote—foul must be made to appear fair.

#### ACT II. SCENE I

4. *I take 't, 'tis later, sir*: This reply is ideally like that of any sleepy boy. Do you see the evidence of sleepiness?

5. *husbandry*: thrift. *that too*: his shield.

7. *Merciful powers, restrain in me, etc.*: Here speaks the deep in Banquo's nature. He fears to relax his mind lest it be seized with suspicions and fears of Macbeth. All his loyalty and his anxiety for his king is implied in this prayer.

14. *largess*: gifts; *offices*, servants' quarters.

16. *shut up*: retired for the night. (Shut up was not uncommon in Shakespeare's time to mean, conclude, bring to an end; and was sometimes, as here, used intransitively.)

18. *the servant to defect*: dominated by our lack of preparation.

19. *Which*: antecedent, will. *wrought*: an old form of the verb *work*, found nowadays in such expressions as *hand-wrought*. Observe the form *wright*, meaning worker, in such compounds as wheelwright, shipwright, etc.

22. *We*: can this be the "royal we" hurried into Macbeth's speech?

24. *kind'st*: most convenient (*kind* in the sense of natural).

25. *cleave to my consent, when 'tis*: agree with my plan, when the conference takes place. Macbeth cannot speak very plainly of his desire to have Banquo as an accomplice, and probably after Banquo's reply he never contemplates such a hope again. This passage should be recalled later, when we are convinced that Macbeth both hates and fears Banquo.

26. So I lose none, etc. is the frank word of a loyal subject.
28. franchised: free (from disloyalty).
34. Come, let me clutch thee. "Macready, in the Dagger Scene, would gaze fixedly for a moment into space, then throw himself in a delirium of horror upon the illusion."
36. sensible: perceivable (*sentio*).
40. in form as palpable: solid, capable of being felt.
44. Mine eyes are made the fools, etc.: either my eyes are deceived, or all my other senses are deceived, and the eyes alone right.
46. dudgeon: hilt; gouts: drops. (Compare our word gutter).
48. informs: presents an image (*forma*).
51. curtained sleep: the person sleeping in a curtained bed; Witchcraft celebrates pale Hecate's offerings; witches solemnize their sacrifices to their goddess, Hecate. She was called pale because the moon was her planet.
52. withered Murder: Murder who withers.
54. Whose howl's his watch: When the wolf howls, then is the time for murder.
55. Tarquin's ravishing strides: with which he stealthily approached the chamber of Lucrece, to "abuse" her "curtained sleep: "
58. prate of my whereabouts: echo my footsteps.
59. present horror: The awful silence was to Macbeth's sensitive imagination just suitable for his contemplated deed.
61. Words to the heat of deeds, etc.: He feels his resolution likely to cool as his fancy plays over the situation. The old saying is, "Strike while the iron is hot." bell rings: We know, from a later passage, that the bell rings twice, but we cannot certainly infer the hour, from this fact. The time of the murder is very difficult to fix.
63. Hear it not, Duncan, etc.: This is a so-called *tag-rhyme*, to mark the end of the scene, but there is in it a mingling of resolution with dread and sadness that makes it natural, even if insincere.

## SCENE II

3. **fatal bellman**: One of the duties of the old-time bellman, or nightwatch, was to warn a condemned person the night before his execution.

4. **stern'st**: the most solemn and inexorable.

6. **possets**: night-drinks. "Posset is hot milk poured on ale or sack, having sugar, grated bisket, and eggs, with other ingredients, boiled in it, which goes all to a curd." In this ancient recipe there is a sufficient disguise, one would think, for any drug Lady Macbeth should please to introduce.

7. **death and nature do contend, etc.**: Death fights to make them die; Nature, to keep them alive. This phrasing is parallel (like Banquo's "neither beg nor fear your favors nor your hate"), but the objects of the verbs in this case are in inverted order. Such a figure is called *chiasmus*, or the cross-construction. **nature**: life.

11. **The attempt and not the deed confounds us**: Lady Macbeth is afraid, not of the crime, but of detection. She feels sure, as before, that, once king, Macbeth can stifle suspicion and opposition.

13. **resembled my father as he slept** shows how close the woman was to the criminal.

15. **I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?** The colloquy immediately after the murder was spoken by Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard in deep, hollow, fearful whisper,—a method which has been used ever since.

21. **Sorry**: connected, not with our word sorrow, but with *sore*,—meaning pitiable, miserable.

27. **Amen**: It was, and in some quarters still is, a custom in England, to respond in this way to any solemn greeting or blessing. Macbeth's nature is being stirred to the very depths by these incidents of the murder, which work with incredible intensity on his imagination.

34. **so, it will make us mad**: With a woman's intuition she accurately foresees the trend of these imaginings, and fears their effect quite as seriously upon her own mind as upon her husband's; for she knows she cannot stand much further strain and

keep herself in condition to give him the moral, or immoral, support he will need. Before the end of the play it will be quite clear that these moments burned themselves deep into her heart, perhaps into her conscience. **so:** if they are so thought of.

**35. Sleep no more:** These three words convey the whole scheme of retribution, and Macbeth almost realizes it. His wife also becomes frantic with the fear of it, but, for the time being, subdues her terror to an attitude of common-sense, which her wifely ambition aids her to assume.

**36. the innocent sleep:** No other lines in the play have moved to sympathy so many readers' hearts as these. It is a matter of no small interest to compare them with the description of sleep given by Sir Philip Sidney in one of his love sonnets:

Come Sleep! O Sleep, the certain knot of peace,  
The baiting-place of wit, the balm of woe,  
The poor man's wealth, the prisoner's release,  
The indifferent judge between the high and low!

**37. ravelled sleeve of care:** a tangle of unspun threads, which illustrates the condition into which care reduces the mind. Sleep knits these up into order and form. The expression is one peculiar to the problems of the old-fashioned weavers, but the experience is universal—we have all had it.

**39. second course:** a meat-pie or pudding used to be served first, the roast second. (Then for dessert, something rare, if possible, like olives, and not necessarily sweet.)

**44. Who was it that thus cried?** As acted by Mrs. Siddons, Lady Macbeth's horror changes to agony and alarm at Macbeth's derangement. She calls up the resources of her spirit, comes near him, and attempts to call back his wandering thoughts to ideas of common life. She speaks forcibly into his ear, with a strong emphasis on the word "who."

**48. Why did you bring these daggers from the place?** As Garrick came out from Duncan's chamber holding the gory daggers, "his face grew whiter and whiter; and the expression of horror when he saw and held up his bloody hands, was tremendous."

53. **Give me the daggers:** The woman who couldn't kill the king, can now, for the sake of preserving her husband's life and sanity, go into the chamber of death and perform a far more gruesome act.

54. **'tis the eye of childhood, etc.:** a taunt at Macbeth, who invented the plan of throwing suspicion on the grooms,

When we have marked with blood those sleepy two

Of his own chamber, and used their very daggers.

55. **painted devil:** a picture of the devil.

56. **gild the faces:** The *pun*, so shocking to our ears, was simply, to an Elizabethan audience, evidence of great ingenuity, or eloquence, of language. Such a play upon words is to be found at every very serious moment, every tragic crisis, in this play. To think of gold as red was common.

57. **Knocking within:** as De Quincey points out, the shock to the audience of the knocking on the gate arises chiefly from the suddenness with which thought is recalled from "the awful parenthesis of the crime" to the everyday occurrences of life in the world at large.

62. **Multitudinous:** vast and widely distributed. **incarnadine:** redden.

63. **the green one red:** the green color wholly red.

66. **At the south entry:** Lady Macbeth's sense is very accurate and specific.

67. **A little water clears us of this deed:** her suggestion is practical, while his thought is emotional and fantastic.

68. **Your constancy, etc.:** Your self-control has deserted you; **unattended** suggests the loss of a companion.

70. **nightgown:** what we should call a bath-robe. The seemingly cotton tunic of modern times was unknown to Macbeth, and probably to Shakespeare.

73. **To know my deed 'twere best not know myself:** Replying directly to his wife's last exhortation, Macbeth says, "When I think what I have done, I wish I could 'lose' myself, forever."

74. **I would thou could'st:** Is Macbeth repentant, or merely terror-stricken at the reaction within himself and at the knocking on the gate? The simplicity of his words, and especially

the freedom from the usual tag rhyme, give this speech a tone of sincerity.

## SCENE III

2. **have old**: have overmuch. *Old* was an adjective and rather slangy.

3. **Knock, knock, knock**: the response of the drunken Porter to the summons from the outside world is as different as possible from that of either of the others. It is this dramatic contrast that justifies the vulgar-comic Porter's Soliloquy. It is an interruption, but it heightens the effect of tragedy in what follows.

5. **expectation of plenty**: The farmer thought his good crop would bring a good price; but he found that other farmers were going to have good crops, too. So, in the words of the old song, "He hanged himself when corn grew cheap againe."

6. **napkins**: handkerchiefs.

7. **sweat for 't**: Note the double meaning—to find hot work farming in hell, and, to suffer the penalty of his suicide. (Compare "You shall sweat for that," meaning, "You shall go to jail.")

8. **th' other devil's dame**: His drunken memory has lost the list of names, but his fanciful invention does not fail.

9. **equivocator**: a Jesuit, whose particular gift was supposed to be the power of deceiving by telling the literal truth. The Jesuitical doctrine that "the end justifies the means" is implied in the phrase, **committed treason enough for God's sake**.

The testimony of Henry Garnet, one of the Jesuits involved in the Gunpowder Plot, 1605, was that, in such a situation as his, "it was lawful to employ equivocation, and to confirm that equivocation with an oath . . . and that there might be reasons which would justify him, in such equivocation, in the sight of God."

15. **stealing out of a French hose**: Stealing from one of the two recognized styles of French breeches—that which was described as containing "length, breadth, and sideness sufficient,"—would have been easy and tempting. There was another style, so tight as to leave no chance even for a pocket. If

Shakespeare referred to this latter style, his wit is, as it often is, ironical.

17. **roast your goose:** a joke on the iron of the tailor, which was shaped roughly like a goose, and hollow, so as to contain hot charcoals, the smoke or vapor to go out the neck. The fire was put in by a door at the back, in which there was an adjustable draft. This type of tailor's iron was in use up to a century ago, or later.

There is double meaning in this expression, as in the *sweet for 't* noted above—heat your iron, and roast (We say, "*Your goose is cooked*").

21. **The primrose way to the everlasting bonfire:** the flowery path to hell. "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."—*Matthew*, VII, 13.

26. **till the second cock:** till three (Compare, "The second cock hath crow'd . . . 'tis three o'clock."—*Romeo and Juliet*, IV, v, 3).

35. **physics:** antidotes.

37. **limited:** special, appointed.

43. **dire combustion:** terrible disaster.

44. **new-hatched to the woful time:** new-born to make the time woful. **obscure bird:** the owl.

46. **'Twas a rough night:** Hardly an adequate answer to Lennox's long and stirring account of the night. Lennox shows his surprise in the rejoinder he makes.

53. **The Lord's anointed temple:** Every man's body is a "temple of the Holy Ghost;" but a king's has been *anointed*, at his coronation, by the high priest of the realm. It is this thought which leads to the use of the word *sacrilegious* in the preceding line.

57. **Gorgon:** one of the three female mythical monsters with snakes for hair, whom it was fatal to look upon. Medusa was a Gorgon, the sight of whom turned the beholder to stone.

63. **great Doom's image:** picture of doomsday, when all the graves shall give up their dead.

64. **sprites:** ghosts.

65. To countenance this horror: to act in keeping with this horrible occasion; *or*, to look upon this horrible scene.

68. in mortality: in life.

79. toys: trifles. Renown and grace: a fine *metonymy* for the king possessing these qualities.

80. The wine of life is contrasted with the lees, or dregs, which is left. This is a metaphor as false upon the lips of Macbeth as it is eloquent.

81. this vault: the whole world, over which curves the vaulted roof of heaven. Macbeth is being stirred to talk too freely; but he does so in remembrance of the exhortation of his wife, that they should make their "griefs and clamor roar upon Duncan's death."

82. amiss: wrong, with the added sense in Macbeth's reply of missing something (Scotch *amissing*, wanting).

87. badged: smeared.

96. expedition: haste.

97. pauser: one who pauses. Reason stops to deliberate.

98. His silver skin, laced with his golden blood: "His snow-white skin streaked with his crimson blood." This is the most typically Euphuistic line in the play.

In Sir Philip Sidney's romance, *Arcadia*, is a passage which may have led to this very extravagant simile. The virtuous Parthenia, disguised as a knight in armor, was wounded in her "neck of alabaster," "so that here was a river of purest red, there an island of perfectest white, each giving lustre to the other."

102. breeched: sheathed.

104. Help me hence: Either Lady Macbeth faints in reality, *or*, she pretends to faint. If she really faints, it is at the awful picture which the words of her husband bring before her guilty mind; and because she feels that he is imperiling his situation by his too free talk, and by having slain the grooms—an act both needless and ill-judged, to say nothing of its having been no part of their plot. If her fainting is a pretence, she resorts to it because she feels that some diversion must be created to keep Macbeth from more deeply incriminating himself.

106. **argument:** business, affair.

108. **auger-hole:** some small and unsuspected corner.

112. **our naked frailties hid:** our bodies (*frail nakedness*) clothed.

116. **In the great hand of God I stand, etc.:** Relying on God's power, I propose to fight against the pretensions, whatever they are, of the malicious traitor. Has he definite suspicions?

119. **Briefly put on manly readiness:** quickly dress.

123. **does easy:** does easily (adjective for adverb was common usage).

126. **the near in blood, etc.;** the more closely related to Duncan, the more likely we are to share his bloody fate. **near:** nearer.

131. **There's warrant, etc.:** One is justified in stealing away.

#### SCENE IV

**Old man:** Shakespeare loves to introduce such a character, for the sake of giving the audience an impression of public sentiment, and of a world at large. It is these persons who, as it were, *frame* the action of the drama. In this particular dialogue, it has been well pointed out, Shakespeare maintained that "affinity which he chose to establish between spiritual and material storm and darkness."

7. **the traveling lamp:** the sun. "It goeth forth from the one ende of the heaven, an runneth aboute unto the same ende agayne"—*Psalm XIX*, in Coverdale's Version of *The Holy Scriptures*.

8. **Is't night's predominance or the day's shame:** Is the darkness of evil triumphant, or is the light ashamed to reveal the evil done the past night? (*Predominant* was a term used by the astrologists to suggest that a certain planet was in supreme control of the fate of a man.)

12. **pride of place:** place of pride, proud altitude.

15. **minions:** darlings.

18. **eat:** (pronounced *ēt*) ate, tore the flesh of.

24. **pretend:** hold before themselves (*prae-tendo*). **suborned:** bribed to do evil (*sub-ornare*, secretly furnish.)

28. **ravin:** devour.

31. **Scone:** (pronounced *Scoon*) the city at which all kings of Scotland had been crowned up to 1296, when Edward I carried off the "coronation stone" to Westminster Abbey. The Scotch believed this stone was the very one on which Jacob had his remarkable dream of angels, as he slept in the plain of Luz. (*Genesis* XXVIII).

32. **to be invested:** to have the royal robes and power formally put upon him.

33. **Colmekill**, one of the "Western Isles," the Island of Iona, where, it is said, "are buried 48 Scottish, 4 Irish, 1 French, and 8 Norwegian kings, besides many lords of the isles."

38. **Lest:** The prayer of the preceding line implies a fear also.

40. **benison:** blessing.

#### ACT III. SCENE I

7. **shine:** with the light of truth.

10. **Sennet:** a set of notes on a trumpet, different from a "flourish." (*L. Signum, F. Signet.*)

13. **all-thing:** altogether (Compare: *nothing*, I, iii, 96; and *something*, III, i, 132).

14. **solemn:** ceremonial, formal (*sollus-annus*, once a year).

17. **indissoluble:** accent on the second syllable.

22. **grave and prosperous:** weighty and attended with success.

26. **the:** an old dative, meaning, by so much. **better:** faster. The clause is conditional.

32. **parricide:** their murder of their father.

33. **tomorrow:** "Never shall sun that morrow see," and Macbeth is well aware of it.

33. **With strange invention:** Booth's prompt-book, or acting version, has the following stage-direction: "Lady Macbeth, turning from her ladies with whom, apparently she has been engaged, takes his hand, to stop his further reference to this subject."

Two lines below,—*Adieu*—is the following note: "Banquo and Fleance cross to left. Fleance pauses to kiss the hand which Macbeth extends to him."

36. **Goes Fleance with you:** What a natural question, and

how casually asked! Yet it was the inquiry of a deadly foe—deliberate and artful. It was in Fleance that the hateful prophecy of the witches would be fulfilled,—“Thy children shall be kings.”

38. *I wish your horses, etc.* This was exactly what Macbeth did not wish; but how handsomely he utters this gracious farewell!

The greetings and goodbys of Shakespeare are amongst his most interesting contributions to the dialogue of drama. No one can equal him at the art of “small talk,” or the exchange of courtesies.

44. *while: till.* God be with you: equivalent to the usual shortened form, *Good-by*. It is worth noting that if this benison be so read, the line scans perfectly.

48. *To be thus is nothing:* Macbeth confesses to himself that the crown is an uneasy honor.

50. *royalty of nature:* If Banquo were corruptible, Macbeth could use him. But, as he instantly determined after the death of Duncan, he “stands in the great hand of God,” and continues to fight against the evil triumphant in the murder of that good king.

This is the first clear glance in the play at the idea which later on becomes very plain, of complimenting King James as the descendant of Banquo. To make it honorable to be derived from Banquo, Shakespeare must make Banquo’s nature *royal*.

52. *to:* in addition to.

54. *To act in safety:* Banquo is actively opposing the success of Macbeth, and Macbeth knows it, but cannot lay his hand on an overt offence. (Quite likely the very ride he is now starting on is an errand to stir up the opposition of some distant thane. It may be the errand took him specifically to meet Macduff.)

56. *Genius:* guardian spirit.

65. *issue:* descendants. *filed:* defiled.

67. *rancours:* bitternesses.

68. *eternal jewel:* soul.

69. *the common enemy of man:* the devil.

71. *Rather than so, come, fate, into the list, etc.:* Rather than allow Banquo’s issue to crowd me off the throne, come, Fate

(Destiny, Death), into the combat, and I will fight with your aid to the finish. This is an alliance to be resorted to only by a man in desperate straits. But it is seen later that Macbeth does resort to just this alliance.

He proceeds first to dispose of Banquo, and then of all others who stand, or may stand, in his way. From this point on, he is deaf to scruples or to pity, and we can see him growing more and more desperately cruel and death-dealing.

80. *passed in probation*: argued out (*probo*).

81. *borne in hand*: deluded by false pretences (a meaning now obsolete); *crossed*: opposed. *instruments*: agents. Macbeth implies that Banquo has employed such agents to do these men wrong. The noble general of Act I has fallen low, to spend such persuasions on such a pair of accomplices.

88. *gospelled*: filled with the spirit of the Gospel. "Love your enemies; pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you"—from *Matthew*, V, 44. Also, "as we forgive those who trespass against us"—*The Lord's Prayer*.

92. *catalogue*: general list. See line 100, "the bill that writes them all alike."

94. *clept*: called.

95. *the valued file*: the list with qualities attached.

116. *such bloody distance*: near enough to draw blood.

117. *every minute of his being*: every minute he lives.

118. *near'st of life*: the matters most deeply affecting me (compare *bosom interest*).

120. *avouch*: authorize, take responsibility for.

130. *the perfect spy o' the time*: the exact time of the spy or espial; the definite time when you may espy Banquo returning. This idea he clarifies by repetition in the following phrase, the moment on 't.

132. *something*: somewhat. *from*: at a distance from. *always thought*: Macbeth has omitted the introductory part of this clause, *it must be*, allowing this to be carried over from the preceding clause.

133. *clearness*: proof of innocence.

136. *absence*: death.

138. **Resolve yourselves apart:** make up your minds by yourselves.

141. **Banquo, thy soul's flight, etc.:** a tag-rhyme in which Macbeth repeats the mawkish and hypocritical sentiment of pity for his victim which he uttered just as he stepped towards the chamber of Duncan to murder him. It is noteworthy, too, that each of these victims is the guest of his assassin.

#### SCENE II

4. **Nought's had, all's spent:** the truth, pathetically admitted to herself, that they have thrown their all away, and got very *doubtful joy* in return.

9. **sorriest:** most gruesome.

10. **using:** habitually thinking.

12. **what's done is done:** Macbeth knows better. In fact he knew before he began that the murder of Duncan was but the beginning, not the end (compare his soliloquy, "If it were done, etc.").

"Mrs. Siddons says this in accents very plaintive, her intense love of her husband . . . shown in every word."

13. **scotched:** cut, hacked at. **the snake:** everything which opposed his being king.

16. **But let the frame of things disjoint, etc.:** This speech marks a further stage in the progress towards complete demoralization. **both the worlds:** earth and heaven.

18. **terrible dreams:** the first distinct evidence we have that the "Voice" is fulfilling its threat,—*"Sleep no more!"*

19. **Better be with the dead:** He envies Duncan as did his wife in lines 6 and 7 above.

20. **We:** Booth says the plural is here used in the personal and affectionate sense, and not in the royal manner; and this, among other kindred speeches, should indicate the love that Macbeth feels for his wife. **peace:** means first earthly, then heavenly peace.

21. **torture:** twisting and writhing of the mind—restlessness (*torqueo*, to twist).

22. **ecstasy:** intense excitement, whether joyous or painful. (G. *ekstasis*, state of being beside oneself).

32. **Unsafe the while that:** We are unsafe for a while, so that.  
 33. **lave our honors, etc.:** wash our honors in streams of flattery, to keep them bright.

34. **vizards:** vizors, masks.

38. **Nature's copy:** their copy-hold, or lease, of life.

41. **cloistered flight:** the bat flies commonly, not in the open, like a bird, but between walls of ruins, or rows of trees (*claustrum*, an enclosure).

42. **shard-borne:** borne on shards, or hard wing-cases.

43. **yawning peal:** the night-bell which suggests sleepiness.

45. **chuck:** a pet name, which recalls us rather abruptly to the vestige of human emotion that is alone left in this poor man.

46. **seeling night:** night which blinds the world. Those who trained falcons used to blind them, until tame, by sewing their eye-lids together. (O. F. *siller*, to sew). This is the third appeal in the play to darkness to cover up crime. The first was Macbeth's "Stars, hide your fires, let not light see my black and deep desires." The second was Lady Macbeth's, "Come, thick night, . . . that my keen knife see not the wound it makes!"

47. **scarf:** cover as with a scarf. **pitiful:** Day pities because it can see. It detects what pitiless night has done.

49. **Cancel and tear to pieces, etc.:** utterly destroy that life (of Banquo) which I fear. See the note on line 38, above, on *nature's copy*. Macbeth continues the *metaphor* and enlarges upon it.

51. **rooky wood:** wood full of rooks. There is no distinction to be drawn here between the crow which flies to the wood, and the rooks already gathered there. The important impression to derive is that of ominous and uncanny twilight.

53. **night's black agents:** Macbeth indulges in poetical sentiment about the murderers he is so skilfully setting upon his honored friend Banquo.

### SCENE III

4. **just:** exact. Macbeth is acquainting the two murderers with the details of the plan of assassination by means of the third, who acts also as a check upon their obedience. He is

certainly the best informed of the three (see lines 9, 13, 15, and 19).

10. **within the note of expectation:** on the list of those expected.

15. **Let it come down:** another example of the play on words at the climax of tragedy.

#### SCENE IV

5. **keeps her state:** remains seated on her throne, at the back of the stage, while the guests file into the front where the table stands.

8. **to the door:** Macbeth, in moving about, catches sight of the murderer, but a screen or projecting wall prevents his being seen by all the rest.

11. **Be large in mirth:** Freely enjoy yourselves.

14. **better thee without than he within:** better on thy face than in his veins. The grammar of pronouns was more flexible in Shakespeare's day than in ours.

19. **nonpareil:** the unequalled.

25. **saucy:** stinging, like a strong relish (*salsus*, salty).

23. **casing air:** the encasing or surrounding air, which extends in all directions to the horizon.

27. **twenty trenched gashes:** this gruesome detail is calculated to work powerfully on Macbeth's pictorial imagination. **trenched:** cut deep, like a trench.

33. **cheer:** welcome. **The feast is sold:** That feast is no free gift.

34. **vouched:** declared.

35. **To feed:** merely to supply the demands of hunger.

36. **From thence:** away from home. **sauce:** that which makes food tasty, and whets the appetite.

38. **wait on:** follow.

41. **graced:** gifted. It is to be noted that it is not till Macbeth fixes his mind thus upon Banquo, and lauds him with hypocritical flattery, that Banquo's ghost appears. In other words, the ghost is the creature of Macbeth's imagination quickened by his conscience. Further on, in lines 90 and 91, the same situation recurs.

42. Who may I rather challenge, etc.: a piece of awful hypocrisy.

47. The table's full: Booth's stage-direction is, "Macbeth stares in horror."

55. upon a thought: as quickly as you can think.

57. extend his passion: increase, or aggravate, his suffering.

60. proper stuff: stuff itself (*proprius*), mere nonsense.

61. very painting, etc.: simply the picture your fear produces. Another instance of the "painting of his fear" is cited in the following line.

63. flaws: gusts, like the flaws in a gale of wind. His conduct is fitful, unsteady.

64. impostors: imitations.

66. authorized: accent on the second syllable, as the metre requires, and as was customary in Shakespeare's time.

69. Prithee, see there! behold! look! how say you: "Stares at imaginary spectre"—Booth.

71. charnel-houses: tombs.

72. monuments: graves (a meaning formerly common, now long obsolete).

73. maws of kites: the stomachs of carrion birds.

76. Ere humane statute, etc.: before civilized law purified the state into gentleness.

81. twenty mortal murders: those same "twenty trenched gashes" that moved Macbeth's imagination above, in line 27.

85. muse: wonder, be amazed.

92. And all to all: "Stares at chair"—Booth. Our duties, and the pledge: Our compliments to your majesties, and health to Banquo! They are drinking as Macbeth, his goblet raised, discerns the ghost again.

94. marrowless: unsubstantial, like the bones of a skeleton long exposed to the weather.

95. speculation: sight.

98. Only it spoils the pleasure of the time: Lady Macbeth here makes her first public confession that she is not wholly the happy hostess. She has been, up to this point, thoroughly *game*.

105. If trembling I inhabit then: If I then abide in fear (*in-*

*habito*, to dwell), instead of going forward with boldness. **protest me, etc.**: call me a doll.

**110. admired:** astonishing.

**112. You make me strange even to the disposition that I owe:** you make me wonder if I am as brave as I have thought myself, —a stranger to myself. "Macbeth is not addressing his wife alone, but the whole company"—Wright.

**119. Stand not upon the order of your going:** "Mrs. Siddons here descends from the throne in great eagerness. Her voice is almost choked with anxiety to prevent this questioning. Her action suggests alarm, is rapid and convulsive, as if she were afraid Macbeth would tell of the murder of Duncan."

**120. better health attend his majesty:** The shrewd Lennox has seen and heard enough to convince him of the cause of Macbeth's *ill health*. This is an example of *sarcasm* none the less withering because exquisitely polite.

**124. augures:** soothsaying, auguries. **understood relations:** "incidents which were perceived to have reference to the question"—Schmidt. Circumstances have to be interpreted by the soothsayer, who *understands* occult *relations*.

**125. maggot-pies:** magpies; **choughs and rooks:** birds of the crow family, and therefore, chatterers.

**126. The secret'st man of blood:** Booth's direction is, "Lady Macbeth places her hand gently on his shoulder. At this he starts, and, seeing her, changes in mood and asks the question, 'What is the night?'"

**127. Almost at odds with morning, which is which:** "Mrs. Siddons here appeared very sorrowful, and quite exhausted."

**128. How says't thou:** What do you say to the fact that.

**130. by the way:** incidentally, as a mere rumor.

**135. By the worst means, the worst:** by means of the "instruments of darkness," what desperate course they will now recommend.

**136. I am in blood stepped in so far:** Here Macbeth owns to his wife that he has reached the crisis in his course of inhumanity—a confession very different from his jaunty remarks about the coming fate of Banquo. There is no hope now of real

success or happiness; there is only the desperation of sullen tyranny. **am stepped in:** have stepped in, progressed.

**141. You lack the season, etc.:** You lack the seasoning ("that which keeps fresh and tasteful"—Schmidt) which everybody needs.

Lady Macbeth has spoken three weary sentences only, since the soul-racking banquet was over. At last Macbeth perceives a new submissiveness in his broken-hearted wife, and he says a few words of tender though baseless encouragement as he leads her off to bed.

**142. Come, we'll to sleep:** Booth's note is, "With a look and tone of dreary and forlorn bitterness." Of the closing line, "We're yet but young in deed," he says, "As Macbeth lifts his hand to press his brow, he touches the crown. He removes it, and gazes upon it with looks of loathing. As he does this, Lady Macbeth gradually sinks to the floor on her knees. (*Slow Curtain*)."  
**My strange and self-abuse:** My unnatural self-delusion.

**143. initiate fear, etc.:** the fear of the novice who lacks hardening.

#### SCENE V

**2. beldams:** hags (a fine example of *euphemism*,—calling such women beautiful, *belles-dames*, in order to make them friendly).

**27. sprites:** apparitions.

**32. security:** over-confidence. This suggests the key to the plan of Hecate for punishing this "wayward son."

#### SCENE VI

**1. hit your thoughts:** given you hints.

**3. borne:** carried on.

**4. marry:** Mary, an oath, referring, of course, to the mother of Jesus. **he was dead:** and since Macbeth had on Duncan's crown, he could afford to pity him.

**7. men must not walk too late:** Lennox continues to "hit the thoughts."

**8. cannot want:** can want (the double negative was common in Shakespeare's time). **monstrous:** unnatural (*monstrum*).

**10. Damned fact:** accursed deed.

12. **pious rage**: Lennox suspected Macbeth even at the moment of that hasty act, at which he himself was present.

14. **wisely**: a shrewd comment.

16. **To hear the men deny**, as they certainly would have done, if given the chance, and convincingly, too.

19. **an't please heaven**: if it please heaven,—an outspoken and sincere prayer. Lennox here drops the *irony* under which he has been disguising his accusations of Macbeth.

21. **broad**: too outspoken.

27. **pious Edward**: Edward the Confessor, King of England, 1043-1066.

30. **upon his aid**: for his help. The audience is thus informed of Macduff's errand.

31. **Northumberland**: Siward's domain.

35. **Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives**: free our feasts and banquets from bloody knives (a transposition, called *hypallage*). This undoubtedly refers to the conduct of Macbeth towards his late guest, Banquo.

40. **with**: receiving from Macduff.

41. **turns me his back**: turns his back. The *me* is the so-called *ethical dative*, and has no translatable effect on the meaning of the sentence.

45. **angel**: messenger.

#### ACT IV. SCENE I

1. **brinded**: brindled. It is black cats that we commonly associate with witches, but in this play we have both a gray one and a brindled (streaked, black and tawny, tiger-like).

2. **hedgepig**: hedgehog, which was also called the urchin. This queer and unprepossessing nocturnal marauder was supposed to be an elf, who would steal the milk of cows and would wither plants. He certainly did, and does, the latter, by gnawing at their roots.

3. **Harpier**: not the name of a *kind* of animal, but a fancy or pet name for the "familiar spirit" of the Third Witch, very likely suggested by the harpies, those foul birds described in the *Æneid*.

4. **Round about the cauldron go:** Note the metre of all such lines in the witch scenes. It is very marked, so much so as to suggest the angular movements of stiff old women, with staves or broom-sticks in their hands.

5. **In:** an adverb. **poisoned:** poisonous.

6. **Cold:** read with a shiver, *co-old*.

8. **Sweltered venom sleeping got:** in its long sleep under the cold stone it has sweated a poisonous slime. There is a general impression that toads are not only unpleasant to look upon, but actually venomous to touch.

10. **—ble:** an *onomatopoeic* syllable. It sounds like something *boiling*.

12. **Fillet:** a lengthwise slice from the back. **fenny:** from the bog.

14. **nwt:** an over-grown tadpole, which never becomes a frog—therefore monstrous; in other words, a frog with its tadpole tail retained.

15. **wool of bat:** even good nerves will crawl a little at this touch.

16. **blind-worm:** small snake, not unlike an adder.

17. **howlet:** owl.

23. **mummy:** A scrap of the body of an Egyptian mummy was thought highly medicinal. "Mizraim (Egypt) cures women, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams"—Sir Thomas Browne, 1658.  
**maw and gulf:** stomach and gaping mouth.

24. **ravined:** ravenous.

25. **hemlock digged in the dark:** poisonous root, the more deadly because of the circumstances of its gathering. Such a superstition was, and still is, common. Another example is found in **slips of yew, etc.:** Yew was not only thought poisonous, but it derived an ominous quality from its associations. It was a favorite graveyard tree.

29. **Turk and Tartar:** of evil omen because notorious heathens.

31. **Ditch-delivered, etc.:** born in a ditch, its mother an unfortunate woman.

32. **slab:** slimy.

33. **chaudron:** entrails.

37. **baboon's**: a favorite animal with witches, but rarer than the cat and toad. Accent the first syllable.

44. **By the pricking of my thumbs, etc.**: It would take a pretty *wicked* man to startle such creatures as these.

48. **black**: the worst kind of witches, who did nothing but evil. Two other kinds were recognized,—the white were helpful; and the gray, sometimes helpful, sometimes injurious.

49. **A deed without a name**: what Virgil calls *nefandum*, unnamable, unspeakable.

51. **Howe'er you come to know it**: He was well aware that they knew it "by the worst means,"—that is, through the Devil himself. Macbeth now deliberately puts his own safety ahead of every serious consideration in the life of the whole world. Man could descend no lower; he has reached the *nadir* of selfishness!

53. **yesty**: foamy.

54. **navigation**: the ships that are navigated.

55. **lodged**: permanently beaten down and so ruined. (Such an effect is not fatal to the crop until it is in the blade. If it is very young, it grows straight again and can be reaped).

57. **palaces and pyramids**: the most solid structures in the world. **treasure of nature's germens**: Nature's total supply of the seeds of life.

60. **sicken**: grow surfeited with destroying.

65. **Her nine farrow**: her litter of young. **sweaten**: "tried out" of the body as it hung on the gibbet. These two additional charms are needed if Macbeth's demand is to be obeyed.

68. **an armed Head**: Macbeth's own head in a helmet.

74. **harped**: struck the key of.

76. **a bloody child**: Macduff as a babe.

78. **Had I three ears, I'd hear thee**: *irony*, very flippant and out of place; but Macbeth has lost all reverence.

83. **double**: doubly.

84. **take a bond of fate**: Not satisfied with the mere word, or promise, given by the first Apparition, Macbeth proposes to take Macduff's life as a bond, or forfeit. Stress *bond* in reading.

86. **sleep**: evidence that the "torture of the mind" continues.

**86. Child crowned, with a tree in his hand:** Malcolm, holding a branch of leaves.

**93. Dunsinane:** This word is to be pronounced variously, according to the needs of the metre. Here, the accent falls on the second syllable, which happens to have been the regular pronunciation of the name in Scotland.

**95. impress the forest:** press the trees into military service (compare "press-gang").

**96. bodements:** prophecies.

**98. our high-placed Macbeth:** More triviality of language, arising from elation over the prospect as he sees it. It is as if he jocularly patted himself on the head.

**99. lease of nature:** the natural length of life—"three score years and ten."

**100. Yet my heart throbs:** He has a serious purpose now, and, in his next speech, becomes abusive,—a natural reaction from the conceited frivolity of his previous attitude.

**111. A show:** the so-called "dumb-show," popular in Elizabethan and earlier times. We call such a display *pantomime*.

**112. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo. Down! Booth** notes, "This is said as the line passes."

**119. glass:** mirror.

**121. two-fold balls and treble sceptres:** King James was the Sixth of Scotland as well as the First of England, and therefore entitled to two of those golden spheres which a sovereign delighted to hold in his hand as he sat in state. As for the *treble sceptre*, James's official title, assumed in 1604, was, in fact, "King of Great Britain, France and Ireland." It was tactful of Shakespeare to allude to this threefold honor, however slender the Sovereign's claim on France may have been.

**123. blood-boltered:** blood-clotted.

**126. why stands Macbeth thus amazedly:** It is now the turn of the witches to be ironical and bantering. They chaff him with devilish ingenuity.

**130. antic-round:** quaint dance (*antic* and *antique* are closely related words).

138. infected: poisoned. What an ungrateful "great king" he was!

139. damned all those that trust them: This plainly, if not intentionally, includes Macbeth himself. Note that it is Lennox, that shrewd observer, who is again present at an exhibition of Macbeth's weakness.

144. anticipat'st: gettest ahead of, and so preventest (*anticipio*).

145. flighty: quick as flight.

147. firstlings: the first-born. The moment he thinks of a plan, he will begin the execution of it.

148. even now: now, in fact.

## SCENE II

3. when our actions do not, etc.: When we are not proved traitors by our free-will acts, we may be by what we do in fear. Lady Macduff cannot fathom any adequate reason for her husband's leaving home so secretly. It is easy for us to know that he must have left so, if he was to succeed in getting away at all.

9. the natural touch: tenderness of fatherhood. *Touch*, in Shakespeare, always has some deeper sense.

15. school: control, discipline. for: as for.

17. The fits o' the season: how critical are the times.

19. do not know ourselves: do not know or intend it; hold rumor, etc.: believe that is true which we fear is true. This is the usual process of a very anxious-minded person—to see in fact what thrusts itself into the agonized fancy.

29. my disgrace and your discomfort: I should be ashamed, and you distressed, if I were to break down and weep.

34. net: made of very fine twine, so that the bird couldn't see it; lime: a sticky substance which clings to the bird's feet; pitfall: a concealed trap; gin: a noose or snare.

36. Poor: cleverly punning on his mother's word above. This was a "bonnie lad" who was trying so ingeniously to cheer up his deserted mother.

65. not to you known, etc.: You don't know me, but I know and thoroughly honor you.

71. **To do worse to you:** to do you physical harm.

84. **fry:** offsprung; an abusive term, like *egg*, in the line above.

### SCENE III

4. **Bestride our down-fallen birthdom:** Stand over Scotland, and protect her; after the manner of the true knight, who, when his fellow had fallen, would stand astride his body, and fight from that point for victory or an honorable death.

8. **like:** similar. Heaven echoes the voices of grief which rise from the widows and orphans.

12. **Sole:** mere.

15. **Deserve of him through me:** deserve his gratitude through injuring me. **wisdom:** it were the part of wisdom.

19. **recoil in an imperial charge:** turn treacherous at the command of a king.

21. **my thoughts cannot transpose:** what I think cannot make you bad if you are really good.

22. **the brightest:** Lucifer, chief of the angels in heaven, who, through the sin of treason, fell, and became Satan, chief of the devils in hell.

23. **Though all things foul, etc.:** though every evil person chose to assume the disguise of goodness, yet the good persons must still look good.

24. **I have lost my hopes:** Such cold-blooded cynicism as Malcolm has shown is too much for simple, manly Macduff, and he gives up the last hope he has entertained,—that Duncan's son, Prince of Cumberland, may redeem Scotland from the tyranny of Macbeth.

Malcolm plays on the word *hopes*, thinking of the use of the word to mean *children*. We now sometimes hear such an expression as "the only *hope* of his widowed mother;" or she was the "chief *hope* of his declining years."

25. **my doubts:** the fact that you deserted your *hopes* led me to *doubt* your motive in coming to England.

26. **rawness:** haste and secrecy. It was a suspicious act, of course, and it was proper for Malcolm to be on his guard.

29. **Let not my jealousies be your dishonors, etc.:** Do not let

my suspicions seem to you accusations of dishonor on your part, but merely means of *safety* to myself.

34. **affereed**: legalized. The tyrant's title is now confirmed.

51. **grafted**: incorporated as part of my nature.

55. **Not in the legions, etc.**: How refreshing this outburst from the honest heart of Duff!

58. **Luxurious**: lustful.

59. **Sudden**: violent.

67. **nature**: natural appetites.

71. **Convey**: carry on.

76. **With this**: in addition to this fault.

80. **his**: this one's.

82. **forge**: invent.

85. **Sticks deeper**: Shakespeare as an Englishman could not bear to lose the chance to joke the Scotch on their avarice—one of the traits Englishmen were surest of in their northern neighbors. The two other traits were the lustfulness already confessed by Malcolm, and excessive fondness for strong drink, which, for some reason, Malcolm is not made to assume.

86. **summer-seeming**: soon over, like the season of the year—hot but not lasting.

88. **foisons**: plenty.

89. **portable**: endurable. (This and many other quaint words in the play are transferred direct from Holinshed's chronicle, Shakespeare's chief source in writing *Macbeth*.)

91. **The king-becoming graces**: a most extraordinary enumeration of royal qualities, whether we think of it from Malcolm's or from Shakespeare's point of view. Is there any king in Europe who could be said to possess them all? Can you think of a kingly virtue not contained in the list?

93. **perseverance**: accent on the second syllable.

107. **interdiction**: edict of banishment (compare the Anglo-Saxon *forbid*, I, iii, 21).

108. **blaspheme his breed**: insult the memory of his father and mother.

110. **Oftener upon her knees, etc.**: Malcolm's mother evidently put into practice the two scriptures, "Pray without

ceasing" (1 *Thessalonians* V, 17), and "I die daily" (1 *Corinthians* XV, 31).

115. **Child of integrity**: born of your honesty.

118. **these trains**: these lures, such as he feared Macduff was spreading out before him; **win**: beguile.

119. **modest**: moderate. **plucks**, holds back.

123. **detraction**: Malcolm withdraws all the false charges he has, for effect, been bringing against himself; **abjure**: deny under oath.

125. **for**: as.

135. **at a point**: prepared. This is one of Holinshed's phrases, but compare our common "on the point of."

136. **chance of goodness**: chance of success.

137. **warranted quarrel**: the warrant or justification for our quarrel.

142. **convinces**: vanquishes.

143. **assay of art**: effort of medical skill (F. *essais*, trial, essay). **presently amend**: improve at once.

150. **strangely-visited**: afflicted with an obscure malady.

152. **mere**: utter (*merus*).

153. **golden stamp**: a coin with the king's likeness stamped upon it.

155. **succeeding royalty**: James I conceived himself possessed of this power, as also did his lineal descendants on the throne. Of course, it was James that Shakespeare had in mind when he introduced this incident of the English court.

160. **My countryman**: Malcolm sees some marks of a Scotchman about Ross; though, as a matter of historical fact, he cannot have dressed in a kilt, as kilts came later than the eleventh century.

162. **betimes**: early, soon; **remove**: an imperative of wish.

163. **the means that makes us strangers**: Macbeth's tyranny. **means**: cause.

164. **amen**: an example of the custom referred to in II, ii, 26.

167. **who knows nothing**: the idiot or the dotard.

169. **marked**: noticed.

170. **modern**: daily, everyday, ordinary,—a meaning now obsolete; **ecstasy**: excitement.

171. **who:** whom, in present usage.
173. **or ere they sicken:** before they are taken sick. They die, not a natural, but a violent death; relation, account.
174. **nice:** full of detail.
175. **hiss the speaker:** another figure drawn from the stage.
- teems:** brings forth.
177. **well:** the tragic pun, repeated here till even Macduff begins to suspect its double meaning.
183. **were out:** had joined a rebel company.
195. **latch:** catch.
196. **fee-grief:** a grief possessed in *fee*, or single ownership.
199. **to you:** abrupt in the end, after all his exasperating diplomacy.
206. **quarry:** the heap of dead—a term used in hunting; **deer:** to us, an unspeakable pun.
210. **Whispers:** whispers to (in contrast to *speak*, in the preceding line).
212. **must be from thence:** This cry should dispel any suspicion that Macduff voluntarily neglected to bid his family farewell.
217. **hell-kite:** Kite would be bad enough—carrion-bird of prey.
220. **Dispute:** avenge.
224. **Sinful Macduff:** This self-accusation rises as the impulse of a very good man, not of one who really was more than ordinarily sinful.
239. **Put on:** urge on; **their instruments:** the forces that propose to fight the tyrant.

## ACT V. SCENE I

20. **Enter Lady Macbeth, with a taper:** Retszch, the great engraver, in his *Outlines*, represents Lady Macbeth in the Sleep-walking Scene clad in a long flowing gown, her hair upon her shoulders, and her feet bare.

24. **stand close:** stand back, in a corner, or against a wall.

26. **light by her continually:** in fear of the very darkness she so heartlessly invoked against the king.

39. One, two,—why, then, 'tis time to do 't: "Mrs. Siddons here stood listening eagerly, then spoke in a strange, unnatural whisper." She hears the bell ring as she herself rang it for Duncan's murder; *or*, she hears the two strokes of the castle bell which indicated to her that Duncan's hour had come, and after which she rang her signal-bell.

41. What need we fear: an echo of her

Who dares receive it other  
As we shall make our griefs and clamour roar  
Upon his death?

44. old man: This is as near as Lady Macbeth comes to confessing their murder of Duncan.

47. where is she now: a confession of her guilty knowledge of the murders in Fife.

49. No more o' that: She is now trying to calm Macbeth, who sees the ghost of Banquo.

51. Go to: A vague expression of rebuke or exhortation; queerly enough equivalent to our slang, "Come on."

57. perfumes of Arabia: Compare with Macbeth's "all great Neptune's ocean," II, ii, 60.

59. What a sigh: "Mrs. Siddons uttered this sigh with a convulsive shudder that was horrible."

64. Pray God it be: The Gentlewoman puns on the Doctor's exclamation. Wash your hands, etc.: Here she lives over again the two great crimes, but in her next speech she returns to the moment when the swift reaction from the murder of Duncan brought Macbeth to the verge of insanity.

82. divine: the priest.

83. God forgive us all: "The great-hearted doctor is not content to cry to God for forgiveness for Lady Macbeth alone."—Churchill.

84. annoyance: injury to herself.

86. mated: stunned. (The word is drawn from the game of chess, in which the term checkmate was derived from the Persian, *Shah-mat*, the king is dead.)

## SCENE II

4. **bleeding and the grim alarm**: alarm of war (*F. à l'arme, L. ad arma*). **dear**: grievous.
5. **mortified**: dead.
10. **unrough**: beardless.
15. **cannot buckle, etc.**: the metaphor suggests the disease of dropsy; **distempered**: diseased.
23. **pestered**: harassed; **to recoil**: for recoiling.
24. **within him**: every picture on the wall of his memory, every verdict of his conscience.
27. **medicine of the sickly weal**: Malcolm, who will cure the evils of the state.
29. **so much as it needs**: It is like the canny Lennox to modify the extravagant patriotism of Caithness in the line before.

## SCENE III

3. **taint**: (intransitive) be tainted, or touched (*tangere*).
5. **mortal consequences**: that which is in store for mortals.
8. **English epicures**: the soft and luxury-loving English. Shakespeare magnanimously quotes the usual sneer of the Scotch at the English of his time. Compare the note on the supposed vices of Scotland, IV, iii, 60-90.
11. **cream-faced**: one of several abusive and unworthy epithets applied by the king to the poor servant who is white with fear; **loon**: fool; as, also, **patch**, below.
21. **cheer**: pronounced *chair*, enthrone as well as encourage—another ingenious double meaning, but, to our taste, out of place. It contrasts with **disseat**.
23. **sear**: sere, withered; Macbeth had pity, but for himself alone.
35. **moe**: more; **skirr**: scour, ride hastily through.
50. **cast the water**: examine the urine.
52. **pristine**: of former days.
59. **bane**, destruction.

## SCENE IV

2. **chambers**: a moving allusion to his father's end.
7. **err**: making either more or less. More would terrify, less would deceive into false confidence. Recall the third Apparition.
9. **endure, etc.**: wait for us to besiege it.
8. **confident**: bold, in a bad sense; boastful.
11. **where there is advantage to be given**: at every point where an advantageous offensive could have been taken, as, for example, on some natural rise of ground lying in the path of the approaching enemy; *or*, where there is hope of advantage to be gained by desertion.
12. **more and less**: the occupants of such a vantage-ground, both nobles and peasants.
14. **censures**: accurate judgments, as opposed to rosy hopes.
19. **Thoughts speculative** is contrasted in a similar way, by the veteran Siward, with **certain issue**.

## SCENE V

5. **forced**: reinforced.
11. **fell of hair**: mass of hair on the scalp. A *fell* was what we call a *pelt*.
12. **treatise**: tale.
17. **should have died hereafter**: should have lived longer.
20. **creeps**: In reading, phrase here, and again after pace.
22. **our yesterdays have lighted fools, etc.**: We have all used the days of our lives to pursue our foolish way to a meaningless end. This despairing doctrine, of the *universal futility of life*, is the total lesson Macbeth can draw from his wife's experience and his own. It would be a true lesson if all lives were like theirs, selfish and destructive.
23. **brief candle**: the too short and self-devouring life of Lady Macbeth. (Can one seem to feel, in the many moral sayings in this play, the influence of the Puritanism that was so tremendous an undertow in the current of King James's reign?)
40. **cling**: wither, so that thy flesh will cling to the bones.

41. **if thou dost for me as much:** All his hope is in the prophecy of the witches; if that fail, he has nothing else to live for.

42. **pull in:** rein in—another metaphor drawn from the management of a horse.

43. **doubt the equivocation, etc.:** wonder whether the devil was not equivocating in the speeches of the Apparitions.

44. **lies like truth:** tells the truth in such a way as to make it deceitful. This is a good definition of the word *equivocation* in one of its senses.

52. **harness:** armor.

#### SCENE VI

4. **battle:** a division of troops in battle-array (compare *battalion*).

#### SCENE VII

1. **tied me to a stake:** the metaphor is that of a bear-baiting, in which the bear was chained to a stake in a round enclosure, and dogs were set upon him to bait or harass him to death. **course:** round. The baiting continued, with regular intermissions, until the bear was killed.

Macbeth now puts his faith in the prophecy of the second Apparition—the Bloody Child.

22. **bruted:** noised, advertised (from the French noun, *bruit*, noise).

29. **strike beside us:** instantly come over to our side. Compare line 25 above.

#### SCENE VIII

1. **Roman fool:** like, for example, Brutus or Cassius in the *Julius Caesar*, familiar to the audience.

2. **lives:** living men; **the gashes do better upon them:** This bloodthirsty mood recalls the fight against Norway—"nothing afear'd of what thyself didst make, strange images of death."

9. **intrenchant:** incapable of receiving a cut from a sword.

14. **angel,** the devil.

16. **Untimely ripped:** prematurely brought forth by some accident to his mother's body; or, perhaps, by the surgical opera-

tion known as "the Casarean section," in which the abdominal wall is cut through.

18. **cowed my better part of man:** beaten down my courage, "the better part of my manhood."

20. **palter with us in a double sense:** trick us with equivocations. The first Apparition alone told Macbeth the truth.

29. **baited:** snapped or snarled at. Macbeth feels that this is an unendurable thought.

32. **Yet I will try the last:** Macbeth's courage returns, though he knows his fate is sealed.

34. **And damned be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"** Both Booth and Irving used to close the play with this combat but with somewhat different management of details.

Booth's directions are, "They fight and Macbeth is killed. Flourish. Enter with drum and banners, Malcolm, Ross, Lennox, and soldiers. *All.* Hail, King of Scotland! Flourish. Curtain."

Irving has, "They fight. Macbeth is slain. Enter Malcolm, Siward, Ross, the other Thanes, and Soldiers. *Macd.* Hail, King! *All.* Hail, King! Flourish. Curtain."

36. **go off:** die.

46. **Had he his hurts before:** Was he wounded with his face to the foe?

It is a relief that, in the presence of old Siward, no allusion is made, even by Ross, who deals in gruesome details, to the fact that young Siward met his death at the hands of the "bloody tyrant."

48. **hairs:** heirs—the inevitable pun.

56. **pearl:** ornament (like the common use of *jewel*, *diamond*, *diamond in the rough*, etc.).

63. **Henceforth be earls:** King James had created seven hundred knights in the first three months after his accession, and many earls and barons as well.

69. **dead butcher and his fiendlike queen:** This is the award of public sentiment to the lives of the usurping king and queen.

72. **grace of Grace:** favor of God. Thus foul is at last to become fair.

at HS



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